£4.99 Xmas 1997 **ISSUE 58** EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PC GAMES!

PC ZONE

www.pczone.co.uk



QUAKE II

It's here... we've played it!
Turn to page 48 for our verdict

EVERY NEW RELEASE REVIEWED!





First Look:
X-COM: Interceptor
Fifth Element
Starship Troopers
BattleZone

EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!
Football's coming home
SENSIBLE SOCCER 2000





GRAND THEFT AUTO
Steals on wheels

BLADE RUNNER
Wake up! Time to play

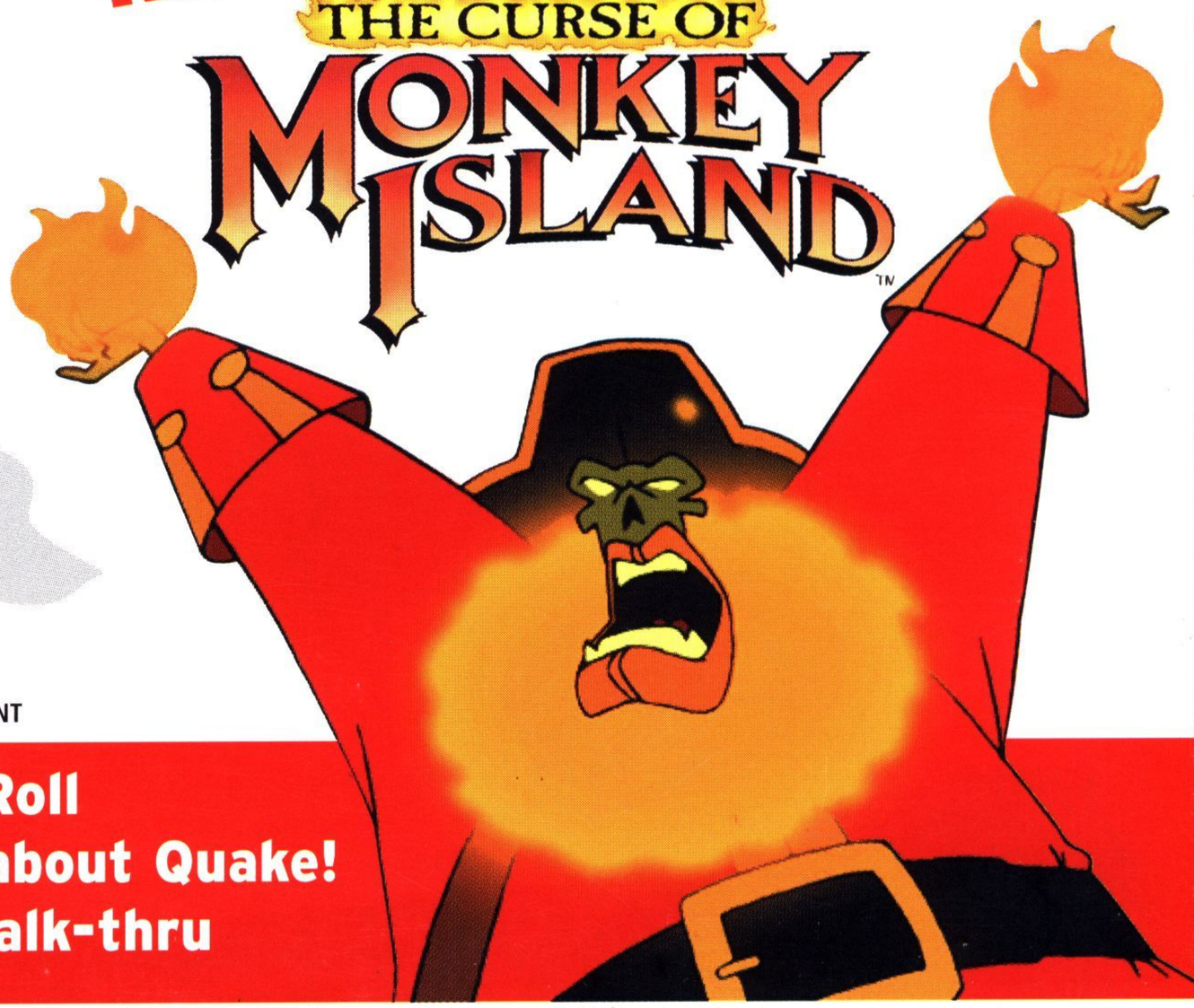
WORMS 2
The worm has re-turned

MYTH
A new dawn in real-time strategy gaming?



EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!

THE CURSE OF MONKEY ISLAND™



PLUS!

IF YOUR CD IS MISSING PLEASE CONSULT YOUR NEWSAGENT

- John Hare on Sex, Drugs & Rock 'n' Roll
- Everything you ever wanted to know about Quake!
- Why girls don't like games • LOL 2 walk-thru

In the time it takes to turn this page,
the US military could have launched
enough firepower to counter any opposition.
Our game runs along similar principles.









F22

DID AIR DOMINANCE FIGHTER™

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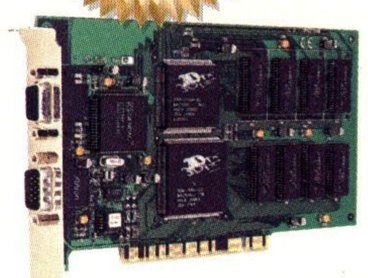




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WIN! WIN! WIN!



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WIN! WIN! WIN!



A MEGA POWERUL PC!

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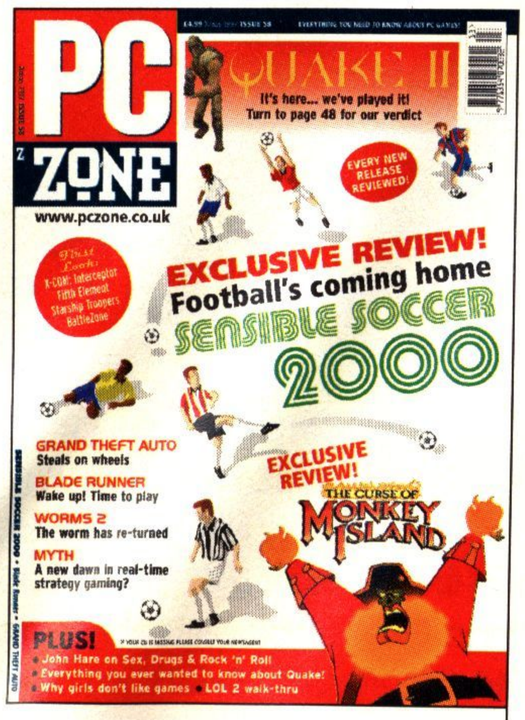
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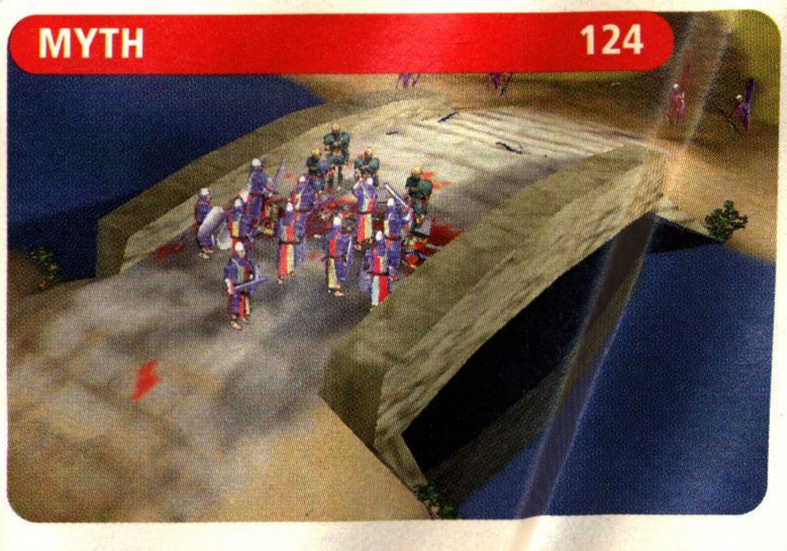
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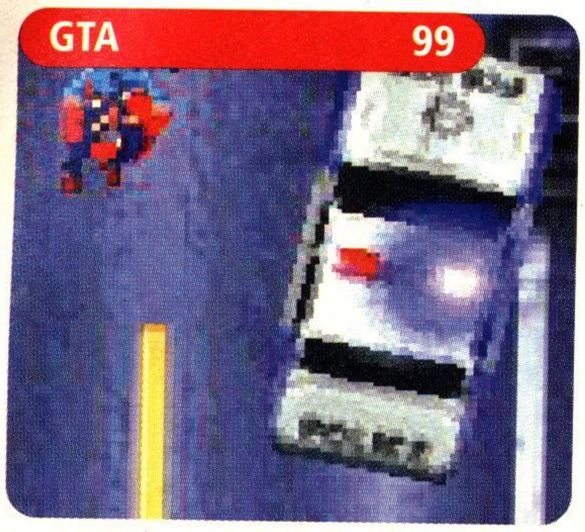




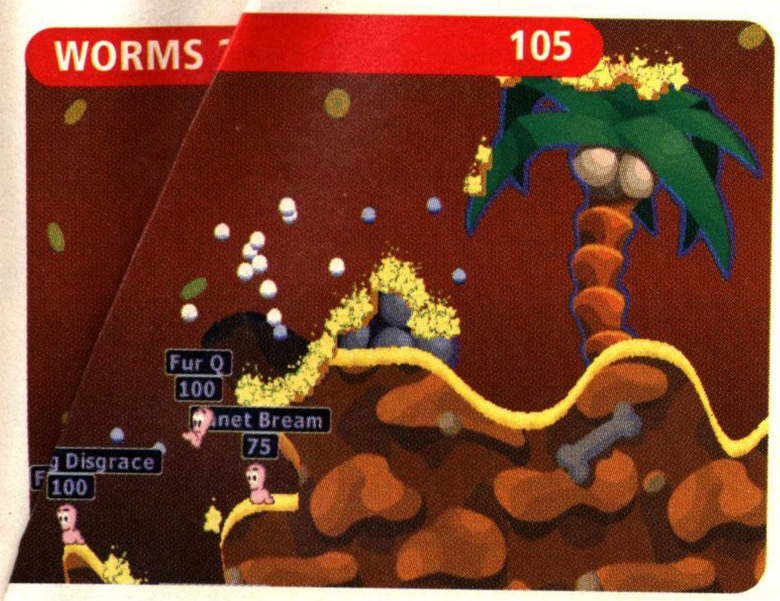
Sensible Soccer 2000

Have Sensible Software pulled off the coup of the year and produced the most playable football game ever? Turn to our EXCLUSIVE review on page 80 to find out!













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PPA

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CD ZONE

On the disc



This month we've got TWO fantastic CDs for your delectation. Check out this month's CD ZONE for EXCLUSIVE playable demos of the fantastic *Age Of Empires* and *Overboard!*, but not before you've worked your way through our *COMPLETE QUAKE* CD which is packed full of *Quake* Total Conversions, extra levels and editors. To access the games on CD ZONE, pop the disc in your CD-ROM drive and double-click on the CD icon on your desktop. Double-click on PCZONE.EXE to launch the Windows browser.

MINIMUM SPECIFICATION

You'll need at least a Pentium 90 with 8Mb RAM to run the software on this month's CD-ROM.

Many of the programs are designed to run under Windows 95 and, as a result, some of them may require a Pentium 133 with 16Mb RAM to run satisfactorily. Please note that some games also require a 3D accelerator card to run.

Use the browser and menu system to see which demos are Windows 95, DOS and 3D accelerator only.

Help!

The CD not working? HD playing up? The PC's being a total bast? Don't worry – phone our helpline and sort yourself out pronto!

HD DISK HELP

Phone Matthew on 01274 736990
Any week day between 9am and 4pm

CD-ROM HELP

Phone ABT on 01708 250250
Any week day between 11am and 5pm
(Please DO NOT phone the *PC Zone* office as your calls will NOT be answered)

If you are calling either help line, then please take note of the following points:

- If possible have your PC operating and near to the phone when you call.
- If this is not possible, note down all relevant information ie system type, sound card, RAM etc, plus the nature of the fault.
- Make sure you have a pen and paper to hand when you call to jot down the relevant info.

No CD?

If you're unable to get your grubby paws on the CD issue, then fear not! Simply fill out this slip, enclose your HDs from the cover plus a cheque for a whole £1 and send it to:

CD Exchange (58), *PC Zone*, Bradley Pavilions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol, BS12 OBQ

Your details (please print clearly)

Name:.....

Address:.....

.....

Post code: .....

Please make cheques payable to:

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CDs from previous issues are also available.

AGE OF EMPIRES

Microsoft

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!



OUR EXCLUSIVE DEMO OF *Age Of Empires* has several scenarios for your perusal. Choose campaign on the main menu and then one of the scenarios at the bottom of the screen. Use the mouse to select units and right-click where you want them to go. Left-click buildings to see what options become available at the bottom of the screen. Here are some general tips to get you started in the scenarios.

1 These are your villagers. Left-click on them and a build icon will appear at the foot of the screen. Left-click on the building you want and the villager will build it.

2 A barracks. Get your villagers to build one sooner rather than later! Trust us.

3 Deer + villager = food. Left-click on the villager, then right-click on the deer.

4 A storage pit. Click on this and new items you can research will appear at the bottom of the screen.

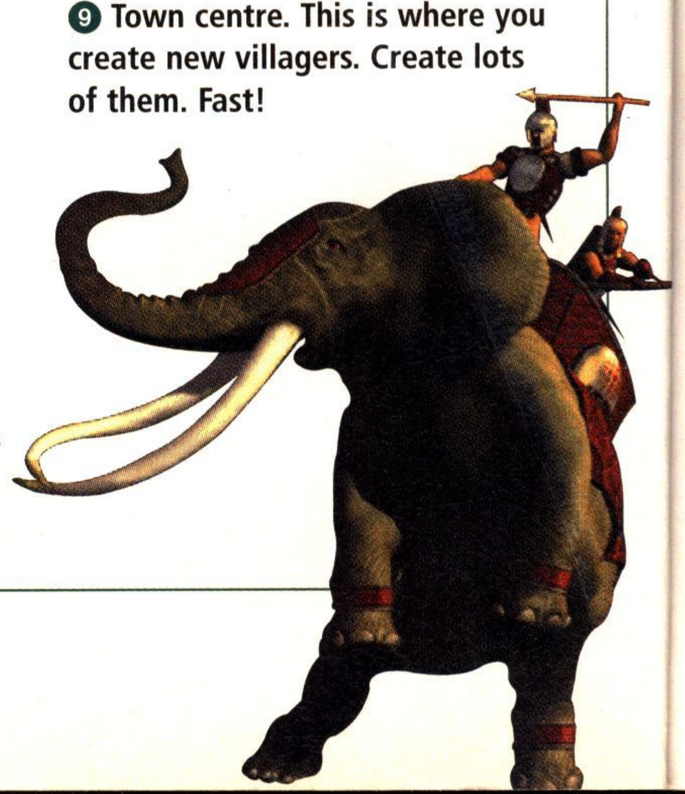
5 Trees. Get your villagers to chop these down for wood which you'll need to build things with.

6 Do the same thing with this quarry to get some stone.

7 You'll need to build new houses as your population increases.

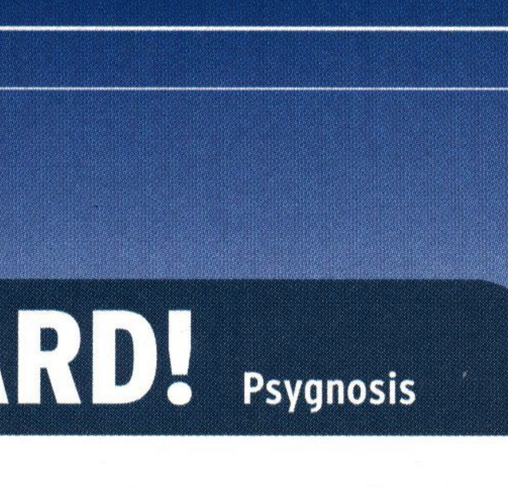
8 Action icons. These appear when buildings or units on the main screen are selected. These will change according to what you can do with the building or unit in question.

9 Town centre. This is where you create new villagers. Create lots of them. Fast!



OVERBOARD! Psygnosis

BE YOUR OWN ERROL FLYNN IN THIS EXCLUSIVE DEMO OF A CUTESY action game where the aim is to guide your galleon through treacherous waters against pirate ships, twisty-turny things and fire-spurting cannons. If your ship happens to catch alight then your crew will start abandoning ship – big girls blouses that they are – so you'll have to turn round and pick them up. This version is for 3Dfx only.



Controls: Keyboard

↑ ← ↓ →	Movement
CTRL	Boost
,	Fire/fire left
.	Fire right
J & ↑ ← ↓ →	Quick fire
L / K	Cycle weapons
[space]	Map
TAB	Change view



GRAND THEFT AUTO (BMG)

Another one the censors have been pondering over – *GTA* has you stealing cars and trashing them, all in the name of fun. The arrow around your car tells you the general direction to head in if you want a mission. We find it's more fun to ignore it, find an Uzi and blow away the fuzz. Give it five minutes and you'll be hooked – which is a shame because this demo times out after about 400 seconds. Never mind – you can always start the level all over again.

Controls: Keyboard

↑ ← ↓ →	Directional control
[space]	Brake
ENTER	Enter/exit vehicle
Left CONTROL	Fire
X / Z	Change weapon
TAB	Special

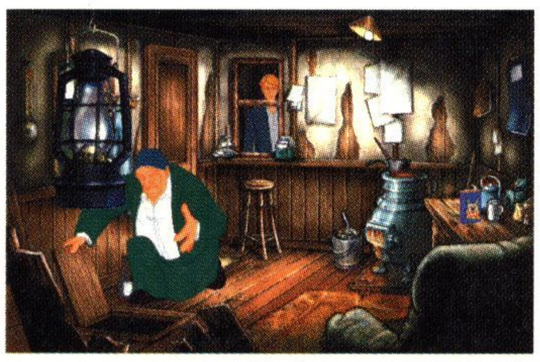


ACTUA SOCCER 2 (Gremlin)

Play a not-so-friendly game in this superb one-player demo featuring creamy smooth commentary from Barry Davis and arse-warble from Trevor Brooking. Makes a change – the police are remarkably well-behaved in this Italy v England game. Thankfully you can just get on with whipping the Italians at what they do best – aside from beating England supporters that is.

Controls: Joypad/keyboard

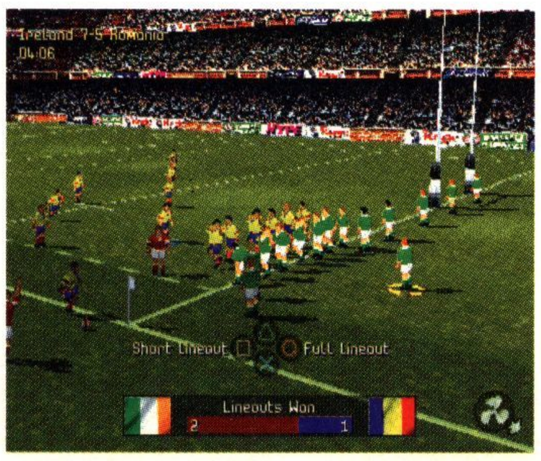
↑ ← ↓ →	Movement
J	Shoot
K	Pass
L	Speed burst
;	Long pass/sliding tackle



BROKEN SWORD II: THE SMOKING MIRROR (VIE)

In this stunning sequel to the classic point-and-click adventure *Broken Sword* numero uno, you have to trick the gatekeeper and his dog to get into the docks and find your girlfriend – sh-yeah right, that's what they all say.

Controls: Mouse



JONAH LOMU RUGBY (Codemasters)

Take on the might of the close-harmony Welsh rugby team in this demo that has you in command of New Zealand and the big man himself. Once you finish the demo go down the pub, drink ten pints of Harp Lager, drop your pants and intimidate women – just to make the whole experience complete.

Controls: Keyboard

↑ ← ↓ →	Running direction
S / F	Pass left/right
A / S	Palm off left
F / G	Palm off right
X	Change player
D	Sprint
C	Throw in/lineout/ kick/score try/tackle

ALIEN CABAL (QASoft)

Doom gets the *Men In Black* treatment in this 3D shoot 'em up where you have to find the secret entrance to the alien base. But beware the shady government agents – they'd rather suck your brains through a straw than help you. So would we in fact.

Controls: Keyboard

↑ ← ↓ →	Movement
SHIFT	Run
DEL	Look down
END	Look forward
PG DN	Look up
CTRL	Fire
[space]	Activate
TAB	Map
< / >	Map zoom in/out



G-POLICE (Psygnosis)

The training mission would have you fly through hoops, but we think you should just get stuck into the full-on blast hysteria. This 3D action game looks superb if you have a 3Dfx card, but you don't need one to play this demo where you must fly your futuristic panda car against hordes of 21st century brigands.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard/joystick

↑ ← ↓ →	Pitch & roll
Right SHIFT	Forward thrust
Right CONTROL	Reverse thrust
Left CONTROL	Fire
Left ALT	Airbrake

A / Z	Weapon select
S / X	hover up/down
C	Target lock
[space]	View select
ESC	Pause

THE GOLF PRO (Empire)

Win a copy of the full game in this three-competition special edition demo! There are full details in-game – basically the computer will log your best efforts. Just make a note of the code and send it to the chaps at Empire with your name, address and bra size.

This latest golfing game utilises a novel control method that requires you to swing your mouse to accurately hit the ball. It takes getting used to, but in-game notes tell you what to do. Note: make sure you install the game files to c:\golfweb as suggested or you'll have to edit the game's .ini file to get it to run.

Controls: Mouse

EXCALIBUR 2555AD (Telstar)

Futuristic D&D *Tomb Raider*-type shenanigans are on offer in this fully playable adventure where you control a sword wielding Lara Croft-a-like against giants and other rancorous cave dwellers. Telstar have injected some much sought after character interaction and adventure into their game – mind you, we didn't think much of it. See what you think.

Controls: Keyboard

↑ ← ↓ →	Movement
SHIFT	Run
[space]	Interact
ALT	Use
CTRL	Fight



SEVEN KINGDOMS (Interactive Magic)

WarCraft meets *Civilization* in this real-time strategy game where you must increase the population of your people and stop wannabe warlords from taking over your lands. Controls are remarkably similar to *C&C* so you'll want to exercise your mouse finger to get through the line of tutorials and two full-blown missions.

Controls: Mouse ▶



◀ SABRE ACE (VIE)

It's all very well flying a jet in these hi-tech modern times when you've got heaps of flashy electronic gadgetry to tell you when you should extend your flaps or empty your ashtray. Way back in the '50s it was a different story altogether: the hapless pilots were strapped into rocket-powered metal coffins without so much as a digital watch to help them. Try your hand in this '50s combat sim and see if you can lick those MiGs. A multi-player level is also included.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick

Note: The keyboard commands won't function correctly if you've got your Caps Lock on, so make sure it's off. See the readme file for more details.

↑ ← ↓ →	Pitch & roll
F1 - F6	External views
HOME	Cockpit view
SHIFT 1	Left echelon
SHIFT 2	Right echelon
SHIFT 3	Trail
SHIFT 4	Flight right echelon
SHIFT 5	Flight left echelon
SHIFT Q	Quit to menus
SHIFT E	Eject
SHIFT R	Arm rockets
SHIFT T	Arm tanks
SHIFT I	View other aircraft
SHIFT P	End parachute sequence
SHIFT S	Toggle sound on/off
SHIFT F	Raise flaps
SHIFT G	Raise gear
SHIFT H	Time compress
SHIFT J	Toggle jettison switch
SHIFT L	Designate new leader
-	Decrease power
+	Increase power
BACKSPACE	Bomb/tank release (must be armed)
R	Reload (multi-player)
I	GCI friend/foe select
O	External view instruments on/off
P	Pause (toggle)
A	Auto-pilot (disables FAD)
S	Weapon sight selector (guns/rockets/bombs)
F	Lower flaps
G	Lower gear
J	Jettison external stores
K	Toggle true/indicated airspeed (default is true)
L	Return to assigned leader
X	Target lock on/off
C	Canopy open/close
V	FAD on/off
B	Brake speed/wheel (toggle)
N	Next target (GCI)
M	Map (toggle)
ENTER	Fire guns/rockets
ESC	Exit game

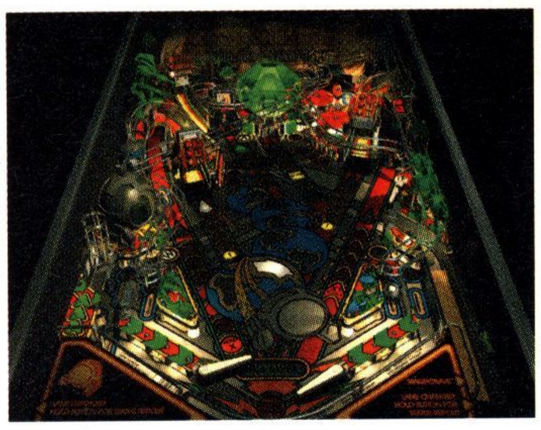


INTERNATIONAL RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP (Europress)

Sharp-eyed rally drivers will have already spotted that this demo was also on the disc that came with our November issue. There was nothing wrong with it, naturally, but wouldn't you like a completely new course to belt around – one across communist China – no question about it.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick

Z / X	Left/right
'	Accelerate
/	Brake
;	Change up
.	Change down
C	Change camera view



PRO PINBALL: TIMESHOCK (Empire)

Pinball may be a better game at the pub, where you can drink copious amounts of alcohol until you just slump over the table and piss everyone off. However, that doesn't seem to stop software companies trying to better the experience and Empire's recent effort certainly comes close, especially as you don't have to keep slotting pound coins into your PC. The full table is available in this demo with limited options – one-player only and no beer included.

Controls: Keyboard

Left SHIFT	Left flipper
Right SHIFT	Right flippin' flipper
ENTER	Launch
BACKSPACE	Magnosave
ALT & ▭	Nudge

HD ZONE

BLUPIMANIA (Epsitec)

Direct Blupi, the chirpsome eggman, around a series of levels by changing the 'décor' to avoid all manner of obstacles. Control is via the side panel – click on the icons and then on the screen to place fences, spectacles etc. Radio-controlled Blupis can be moved via the keyboard. Check out the in-game help.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard

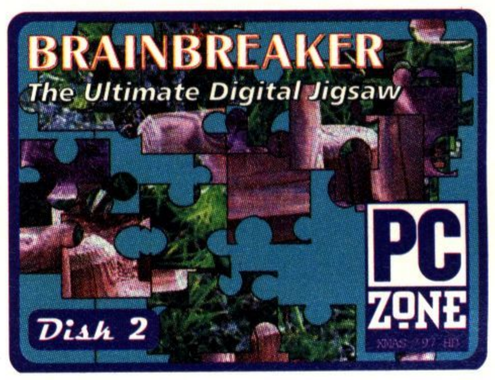
↑ ← ↓ →	Move Blupi
F1 - F4	Place objects
F5	Music toggle
F7 - F9	Set speed



BRAINBREAKER (Shareware)

If bloodthirsty violent action isn't really your kind of thing and you'd much rather sit down and relax with a nice cup of tea and talk yams with your flatulent mother, why not try some hot puzzle action in this jigsaw game? And when you think you've had enough, why not actually go out and buy a yam, stuff it up your arse and experience first-hand exactly what you're missing. If you get into difficulty read the in-game help – it won't help you to remove the yam though.

Controls: Mouse/keyboard





VIRUS (Telstar)

If you want to take a gander at the contents of your hard drive then why not get rid of Explorer and install this *Descent*-style demo instead? The gameplay will depend on what's installed on your computer, so if you happen to have a new PC with nothing but Windows 95 then it could be a bit of a dull game.

This level five training mission requires you to take out nasty little programs that clog up your PC – it's a bit like emptying your recycling bin really, but a lot more fun.

Controls: Keyboard

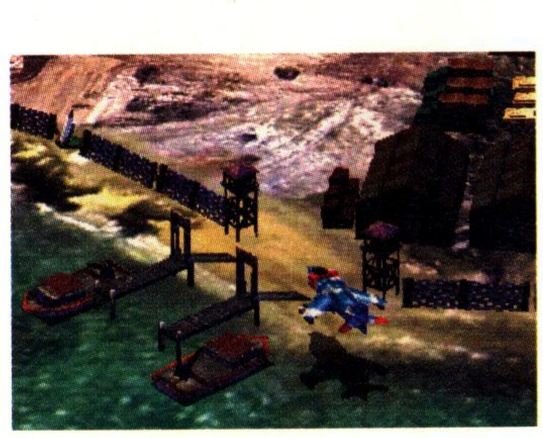
↑ ← ↓ →	Change direction
C	Forwards
Z	Backwards
SHIFT & ↑ ← ↓ →	Movement
CTRL	Fire
▭	File manager/ inventory
G	Toggle gravity
X	Brakes



CIVIL WAR GENERALS II (Sierra)

It's hex-based, it's turn-based and it's American Civil War-based. In this demo from Impressions you can control either side against the other or create maps in the save-disabled level editor. Some people must like this stuff if someone keeps making it – don't blame us.

Controls: Mouse



NUCLEAR STRIKE (EA)

After *Jungle Strike*, *Desert Strike* and the 1984 Miners Strike come EA's third helicopter arcade game – this time with ▶

3Dfx support. This demo features an exclusive mini-level. The HUD radar is located in the bottom right corner of the screen: red = enemy, white = fuel/ammo/friendly, blue = mission item, yellow = heading.

Controls: Keyboard/joystick

Keypad 8 / 2	Move forward/ backward
Keypad 4 / 6	Turn left/right
Keypad 7 / 9	Jink left/right
NumPad ENTER	Change camera view
ENTER	Enter SMFD
H	Cycle HUD options
D	Jettison cargo
Left SHIFT +Weapon key	Select a weapon for the target box
D (held 1 sec)	Call in chopper to transfer from ground vehicle
P	Pause
M	Activate mouse (in 640x480 res)
	Fire chaingun
X	Fire hydra rocket
Z	Fire hellfire missile
C	Fire sidewinder
F1	Cycle missions
F2	Cycle enemies
F3	Cycle assets



JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER (Eidos)

Hop into a Lockheed Martin X-35 and find out why we awarded *Joint Strike Fighter* a classic rating. There are ground targets a-plenty in this time-limited demo. Press ESC for in-game help and a complete list of all keyboard commands.

Control: Joystick/keyboard

ESC	Menu
↑ ← ↓ →	Pitch & roll
, / .	Rudder
H	Toggle hatch
F	Toggle flaps
B	Airbrake
G	Toggle landing gear
1 - 0	Thrust

RAYMAN DESIGNER (Ubi Soft)

A 2D platformer featuring Ray; he may have no arms, but he does have fully functional gloves and inhabits a dreamlike world of giant marshmallows and tooth-rotting sweets. Reminiscent of *Zool* – just run and jump and kill.

Control: Joypad/keyboard

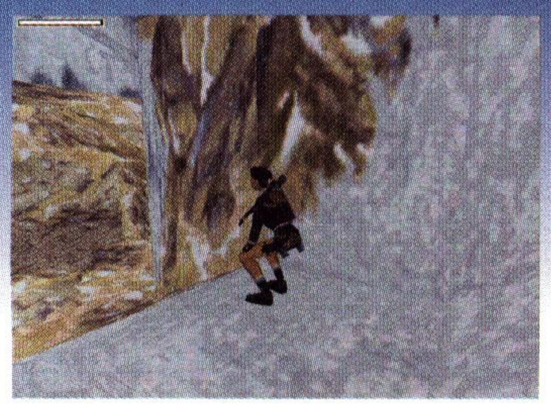
↑ ← ↓ →	Movement
CTRL	Jump
ALT	Fist
X	Action



MAN O WAR (Strategy First)

Control your fleet as the Admiral, sending and receiving orders from your flag ship. Played against a human or computer opponent – or for some test-card action, pit the computer against itself. There are 15 turns of the Camperdown scenario where 23 English ships were sent against 25 Dutch ships off the coast of Holland. Click on the ships to direct them.

Control: Mouse/cursor keys

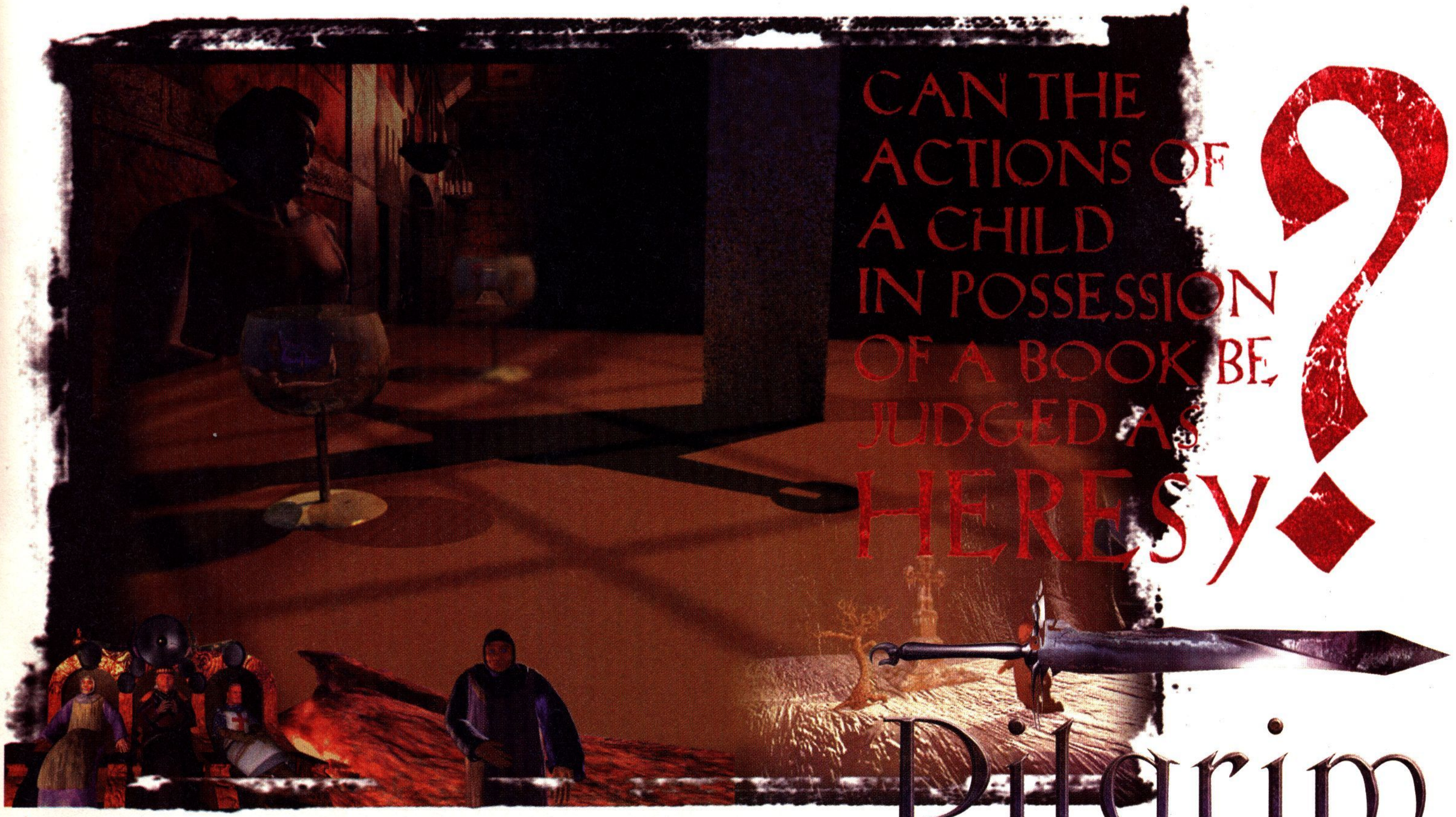


TOMB RAIDER II (Eidos)

After last month's gargantuan blunder (for which heads have rolled) we bring you a working one-level demo of Ms Croft's latest adventure. Essentially it's the same as last month's – except this time round you don't have to perform minor brain surgery on your PC to get it to work. Please accept our humble apologies and quit with the hate mail.

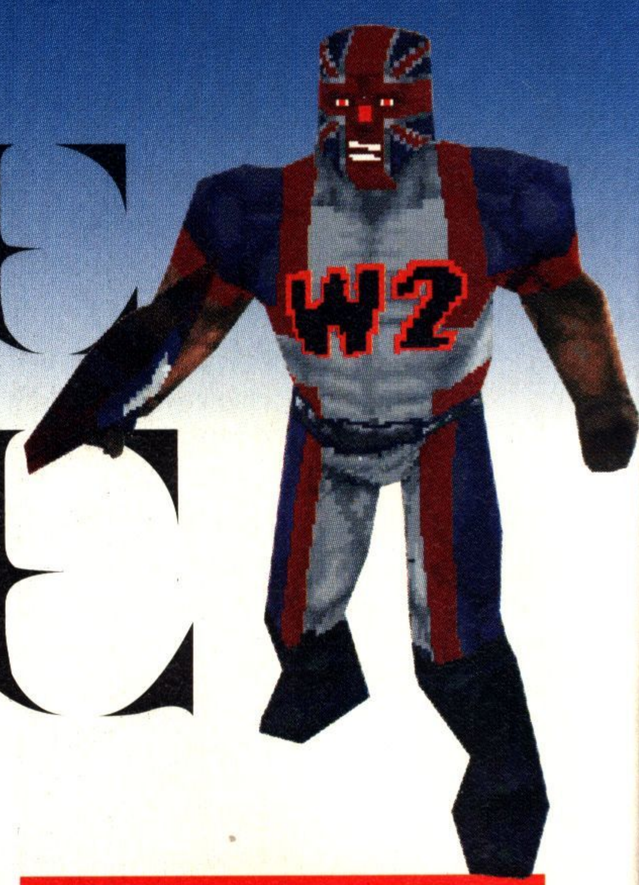
Controls: Keyboard/gamepad

↑ ← ↓ →	Directional movement
ALT	Jump
CTRL	Fire
	Draw/holster/ weapon
SHIFT	Walk
O	Look
DELETE / PG DN	Sidestep left/right
ESC	Inventory
END	Roll





COMPLETE QUAKE





SO YOU'VE GOT *QUAKE*, BIG DEAL. IF YOU'VE ONLY EXPERIENCED THE SINGLE-PLAYER GAME, you most probably will have deleted it from your hard drive aeons ago. Let's face it, it's dull. Somewhat like having an Action Man with only one uniform. Three cheers for us then that we've provided you with a dazzling full new wardrobe to kit out the old codger with. What's more, we've got utilities that'll allow you to look deep within its bowels, cut out chunks of code, mince it up and put it back in a different order. *Complete Quake* – it's a kind of gene-splicing, cross-dressing extravaganza and it's yours to keep forever. Really.

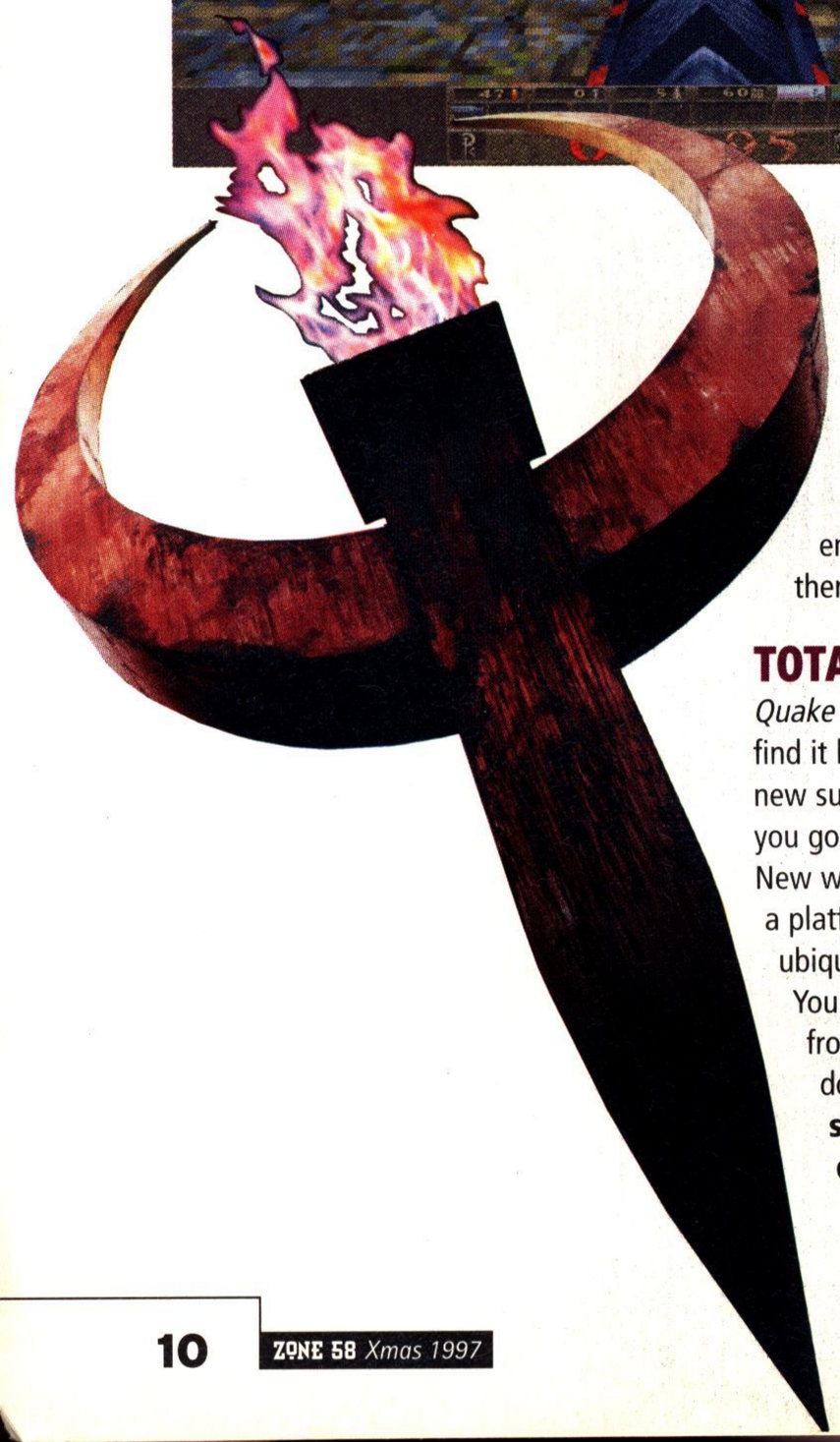




MINIMUM SPECIFICATION

Before you all start salivating at the prospect of perusing our delicious disc of *Quake* delicacies, you will first need a P90, at least 8mb RAM and of course, a copy of the beautiful game itself. What's more, as it's now available on budget, there's absolutely no reason why all you cheap tarts shouldn't own a copy.

Anyway, we know you're dying to get stuck in... First run d:\quake.exe and surf the disc (Windows 3.1x users run d:\zone\win31\quake.exe.). Once the program kicks in, just click on the relevant button to see the installation information and therefore access the many nuggets of delight that await your pleasure. By the way, Windows 95 users will have to run the browser in 16-bit colour – sorry (not).



QUAKE SHAREWARE

Four versions of *Quake* shareware can be run from within our browser program. We have both a DOS and Windows 95 version and two GL versions for those lucky enough to own one of those there 3D accelerator doobries.

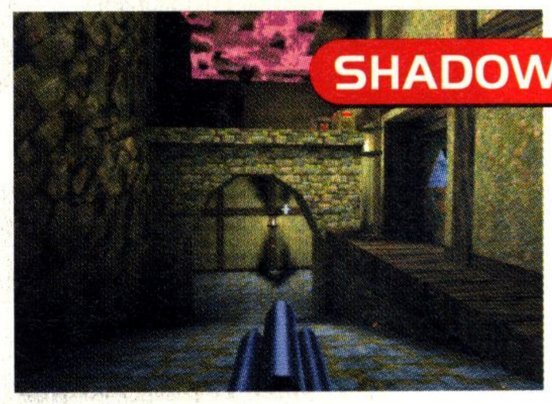
TOTAL CONVERSIONS

Quake in a sequin dress? You won't find it here but there are plenty of other new suits and accessories here to keep you going long after the sequel arrives. New weapons, levels, a bot and even a platform game all utilising the ubiquitous *Quake* engine.

You'll have to install the TCs from outside *Complete Quake* by double-clicking on the respective **setup.exe** within each **d:\tc\xxxx** directory on the CD. A self-extracting zip file will take the files to your own *Quake* directory, although you may have to specify its correct location. Don't worry about cluttering things up, the program will create a separate sub-directory for each TC you care to install.

Running your new conversion is pretty standard. **c:\quake\quake.exe -game xxxx** will run the TC when **xxxx** is the name of the directory and the TC is located on your hard drive. If you only have 16mb RAM and you're using Windows 95 you may want to add **winmem 12** to the command line.

Many of the TCs will run if you have the GL*Quake* patch installed, just run **\glquake.exe -game xxxx** in place of **quake.exe**. For some TCs you may have







to use further commands to play new maps or type in extra commands into the *Quake* console. Each TC's relevant readme file will cover any problems as well as listing extra keys you may need to know about.

MAPS

We tried to count the number of new levels on the CD but the office ran out of fingers at 491 (Mallo submitted an extra digit). We understand there's in excess of 500 levels on this disc all filed alphabetically. Have a gander at the respective readme files and if you want, unzip it to your **quake/id1/maps** directory (make one if you don't already have one), and type **map xxxx** in your *Quake* console to play it – where **xxxx** is the blah blah blah… Be warned, many of these maps are for deathmatch only so they could be a bit dull if you're on your lonesome.

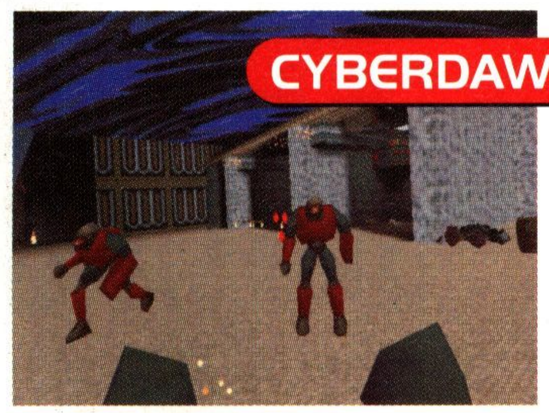


DEMOS

If you want to change those dull old movie-style snippets that run each time you load *Quake*, then rummage within *Complete Quake* and run the self-extracting setup.exe files whereupon they'll magically appear in your quake\id1 sub directory. To run the demo in *Quake* type **playdemo xxxx** into the *Quake* console where **xxxx** is its name.

UTILITIES

If after playing all the new levels you want to see how it's all done or maybe you just want to screw up other people's hard work then try some of these utilities. Each program's readme file can be read from within the *Complete Quake* program so you can find out all about it there. Be warned if you dabble in this stuff – you could seriously damage your *Quake* set-up/sanity/chance of a meaningful relationship with a girl.







BULLETIN

SPECIAL REPORT

Steve Purcell's infamous dog/rabbit duo return.

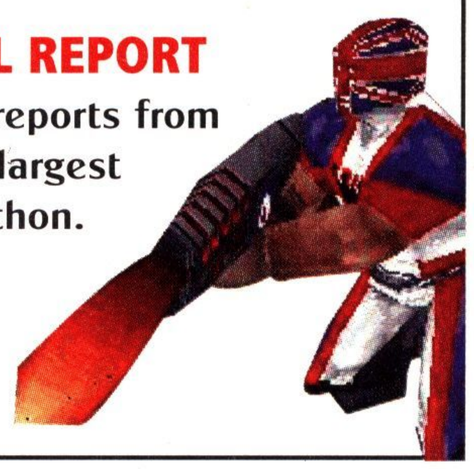
PAGE 17



SPECIAL REPORT

PC Zone reports from the UK's largest *Quake*-a-thon.

PAGE 22



HOT SHOTS

How all the top games are coming along.

PAGE 28



DATAPAD

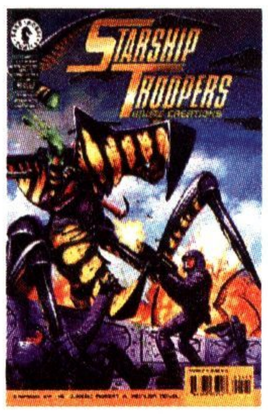
Populous III not till next year

If you wanted to play Bullfrog's long-awaited *Populous III* over the Christmas holidays you'll be disappointed – it's

MicroProse double whammy

GT Interactive paid a great deal of money for MicroProse in a much publicised buy-out recently. Now, with the recent unveiling of new high-brow titles such as *Starship Troopers* and *X-COM 4* – both developed in-house at MicroProse – you could say they've already made good their investment.

Hot news from the world of gore-filled family entertainment: Dutch film-maker Paul Verhoeven's latest alien invasion flick, *Starship Troopers,* has been signed up by MicroProse for a four-game deal, proving that MicroProse obviously have a lot more faith in GT Interactive's long-term intentions than the rest of the industry.



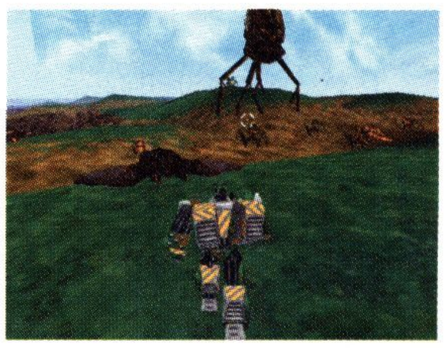


(Left) The comic. (Above) Green-eyed movie monster.

Details about the first title are scant at the moment, although a sneaked report from MicroProse's US offices revealed that it will take the form of a *Tomb Raider*-style combat game, but with heavily-armoured fighting machines. Science fiction purists will no doubt be dismayed to hear that the hardware and weaponry in the game will be taken from the film, and not from the rather more impressive items seen in Robert Heinlein's original novel. Verhoeven purists, on the other hand, will be dismayed to hear that the game won't feature any of his trademark sex and nudity. Still, violence abounds, so that's alright.

The player starts out as a raw recruit in the intergalactic army, playing his way through single-goal missions and rising through the ranks as the game takes on a more strategic air. "*Starship Troopers* has an intriguing plot that promises to make it a compelling interactive game for the PC," commented Stephen Race, CEO of MicroProse and Spectrum Holobyte.





The game promises to be every bit as violent as Verhoeven's forthcoming film.

Anyone still in the dark about the whole *Starship Troopers* groovy love thang are advised to watch the film's trailer that currently resides on this month's cover disc. The film is set for release before the end of this year, while the game is pencilled in for an early 1998 release. Z

Gameplay U-turn for X-COM series

***PC Zone* managed to sneak a peek at the latest addition to the mega-popular *X-COM* series** while visiting MicroProse's offices in Alameda, California recently and, to put it mildly, we were aghast at the 'new look'.

Turn-based combat action and research management have been swept aside in favour of 3D space combat action that's more akin to *Wing Commander* than the *X-COM* of old. Game designer Dave Ellis explained the reason behind the radical change of direction: "The *X-COM* brand is huge, but it's still limited in its appeal. What we're trying to do is open up the *X-COM* universe to more people. The emphasis is on combat, but there's still a lot of strategy in there that will appeal to loyal fans. It's a combat/strategy hybrid – just as *Elite* was."

X-COM: Interceptor is set for release in Spring 98. Check out next month's issue for a full preview. Z



Next *X-COM* to be a space combat game! Strategy fans may have to wait a while for the next 'proper' instalment.

been delayed. However, Bullfrog are keen to stress that the finished product will be well worth the wait.

So what's the hold-up? "There are two factors," says David Wilson, Bullfrog's press officer. "First, since this is Bullfrog's first post-Peter [Molyneux] product, we want to make sure that it's a really cracking title. Unfortunately, there's a perception that without Peter, Bullfrog's going to struggle – so it's really important that the game's as good as it possibly can be. The other factor is that there's so many titles coming out around Christmas, it's almost counter-productive to have all our eggs in one basket, as it were."

Our release date sensors indicate that *Populous III* should be out around February 1998. Race you there!



PC to get V-Rally

Ocean have announced that the PC version of *V-Rally* will be 3Dfx only. But there's still time to amend your Christmas list, as it won't be released until the new year. *V-Rally* topped the PlayStation charts for some time earlier this year, managing to squeeze some passable graphics and impressive speed out of Sony's grey box, although being French, the music was horrific (Ocean, please take note). With a 3Dfx card the game should shift like shit off a shovel, while ably showing off the scenery of such exotic locales as Corsica, Indonesia, New Zealand and Essex.



STOP PRESS: SCi overturn BBFC Carmageddon ruling

SCi's appeal against the decision by the BBFC (the British Board of Film Classification) to refuse a certificate for the original version of *Carmageddon* has proven successful.

The original version of *Carmageddon* was submitted to the BBFC for classification in April. However, much to SCi's surprise and frustration the game was refused a certificate on the basis that the BBFC considered its content "immoral".





SCi decided to appeal against this decision and took the case to the Video Appeals Committee. In the meantime a modified 'zombie' version of the game was released and immediately went to number one in the PC game charts.

SCi claim that the BBFC's decision was contrary to Article 10 of the European Convention guaranteeing freedom of expression. The effect of Article 10 is that the BBFC should only refuse a certificate for a game or video work if it is fully satisfied that the product will have a devastating effect on society in general. The Appeals Committee accepted that – in this particular case – the BBFC had failed to demonstrate that the game would have such an effect.

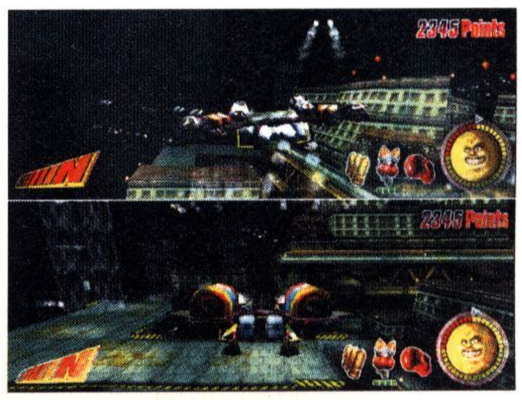
It really is a remarkable result – this is only the fifth time in the 83-year history of the BBFC that one of their decisions has been overturned. It's also the first time that a decision over a computer game has been successfully challenged. SCi are now planning to release an official upgrade patch. Jane Cavanagh, Managing Director at SCi told us: "We were never in any doubt that the BBFC were wrong in their decision to refuse a certificate for the original *Carmageddon*. It's only fair that British people should be able to enjoy the game as it was originally intended."

In light of BMG's recent problems with *Grand Theft Auto*, the back-down by the BBFC is a significant move that will no doubt have further reaching repercussions for the entire computer games industry – especially in the UK. We now await the BBFC's next move with interest.

Aironauts, not Aironaughts

Red Lemon – a new company with the highly-regarded Scottish game developers coalition – announce that *Aironauts* will be their first release.







***Aironauts* is already being described by those** who've seen it as '*Pilotwings* with guns' – which is no bad thing, as those of you who've played Nintendo's classic will be fully aware of.

The game is set in a futuristic prison camp where convicts fight it out in airborne battleships, inside huge obstacle-filled airdromes. They do this to earn years off their 'time', while the evil warden creams a fat profit from their performances. The three-dimensional environments are adorned with suitably dank, dark and decaying textures – it looks like negotiating them will be a challenge. Red Lemon have revealed that the game will also feature obstacle and stunt events, further fuelling *Pilotwings* comparisons.



Split-screen play on one screen, and a mass of multi-player options – plus the inclusion of *WEAPONRY* – will ultimately make *Aironauts* a bit of a cert at the bookies.

We had a warning from Red Lemon head honcho Andy Campbell: "The name's spelt '*Aironauts*'. Some people have been misspelling it '*Aironaughts*' – make sure you get it right." Ooh – and Ocean have beaten everyone else to the publishing post and tell us that the game will be released in the Spring of next year.

(Far left) Icarus would have been proud of those wings. (Above left) The prison camp in all its polygonal glory. (Top) Split-screen two-player. (Above) *Pilotwings* with guns?

DATAPAD

Another Europress corker

Europress have released another cracking compilation: *Total Sports* is the name, and ball-based antics are its game. Where other collections usually give you one decent game plus two copies of *Titanic Blinky*, this one's quality all the way. There's football in the shape of *FIFA 97*, great golfing in *Links LS*, plus the best tennis game on the PC, *Pete Sampras Tennis* (which only came out about ten minutes ago). We don't know how they do it, but as a chirpy minor character from an Ealing Comedy would have put it, they're bloomin' marvellous. It's in the shops now.



Seriously bugged

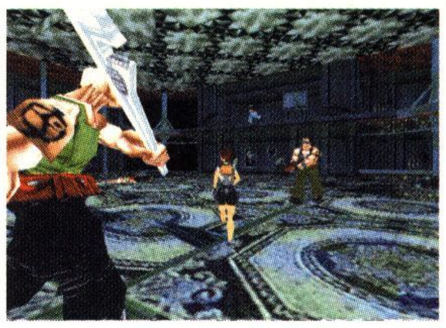


In the true spirit of games like *Tempest 2000*, *Sensi 2000* and, erm, Grecian 2000, David Braben is doing to his old BBC classic *Virus* what he did to his other BBC classic *Elite* (*Hopefully not painting it brown and tying a bow round it – Ed*).

The last release from Braben's Frontier Developments team was heavily bugged to say the least. Thankfully *V2000* will contain bugs of the vindictive alien scum-sucking kind. In the game, players must defend their base and a load of pitchfork-carrying peasants from hordes of determined insect creatures intent on spreading a deadly red virus across the world. No one knows why it's red – it just is. OK? You'll also have to direct other vehicles across the six varied landscapes to complete the 30 or so levels.

If you can't wait until Grolier Interactive release *V2000* next spring then get yourself an emulator and have a go on the original. Actually, don't. Z

Tomb Raider II troubles...



Those of you that bought *PC Zone* last month may have noticed (*oh come on... they're bound to have – Ed*) the fact that our lead demo – a little-known game by the name of *Tomb Raider 2*, suffered from an unfortunate bug that left the whole thing unusable. Fortunately we heard of the bug literally moments before the magazine went into the shops and were able to recall it and sticker the bag with instructions outlining how to get the thing to work.

The *Tomb Raider 2* demo actually expired on 21 October. This was because of an anti-piracy system built into the game's code that was inadvertently left in by the development team before they produced the demo. The system is used when the game is demonstrated at trade shows – if a CD is stolen, the 'time bomb' goes off and the code is unusable. Unfortunately it would appear that the problem didn't just affect *PC Zone*'s cover discs. We already know that some of our competitors were affected, and we understand that the problem is a global one.

Eidos Interactive and Core Design apologise for any inconvenience caused by the problem. Fortunately we were able to provide a fix as we went to press, and have placed a 'proper' demo on this month's CD. Z

Das Quake Im Arschcade



Some US bigwigs have finally twigged that *Quake* might make a good arcade game. The word is 'doh'.

Forget Tekken II, Virtua Fighter, or any of those other spindily multi-player arcade games. Soon you'll be able to play *Quake* in your local coin-op.

Two companies, Quantum 3D and Hyperware, have joined forces with id Software in the States to produce a special *Quake*-based arcade cabinet, built around a Pentium II 266MHz PC with the highest-end ninja 3D accelerator card in existence – the 3DFX Obsidian, capable of whomming *Quake* at 60 frames per second at 800x600 resolution. Wow.

Looking and sounding like a proper cabinet, *Quake Im Arschcade* (our term) will sport a trackball and six buttons, all configurable to accommodate strafing, forward, back, look and jump. And to add insult to injury, the single-player game will have a descending health counter which will count down at one point per second, or one point every two seconds when you're firing – which means that you'll literally have to race to the exits. The levels, too, will be changed to prevent experienced *Quake*-heads clearing up.

Naturally, each cabinet will be networkable to any others nearby for full-on hi-res deathmatching. The release date is sooner than you think, with the first box slated to appear this christmas (woo). Z

Assault and battery



On first sight *Assault Korps* seems similar to Adeline's *LBA 2*, but without the cuteness.

If the turn-based nature of games like *Incubation* don't butter your gaming muffin then maybe *Assault Korps* by Corrosive (formerly Big Red Software, of *Big Red Racing* fame) will. To come out through Eidos Interactive next year, *Assault Korps* will dispense with all the usual resource management malarkey associated with games of this sort. *Assault Korps* focuses on action that'll have you controlling a squad of up to eight troops over a series of 3D terrains, lit up by some superlative-looking lighting effects. Artificial intelligence should be one of *Assault Korps'* really appetising strengths, so players won't have to continually check up on their troops to see if they're stuck behind trees or running blindly into certain death. *Assault Korps is* set for release in April 98, you can find out more at **www.corrosive.com.** Z



Will *Incubation* be given a run for its money by this game?

Start

Microsoft SIDEWINDER

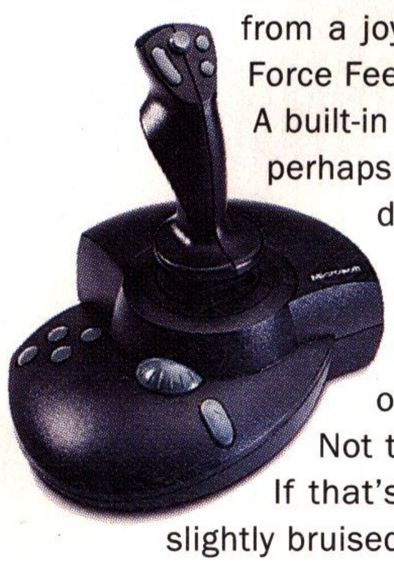
FORGET VIRTUAL REALITY



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IF YOU WANT TO PLAY GAMES, buy a chess set. This is reality. And it bites.

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Or being able to input your best moves into the joystick's memory via its buttons instead of repeatedly jolting your own?

Not to mention 2 free PC games to try your hand. If that's the case, you won't be disappointed. Just slightly bruised. For further information visit our Web site at www.microsoft.com/uk/gameszone/

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HEROES of Might and Magic
A Strategic Quest

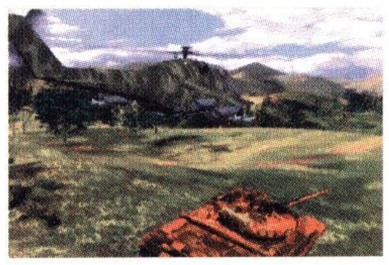
HEROES of Might and Magic II
THE SUCCESSION WARS

HEROES of Might and Magic II
THE PRICE OF LOYALTY

DATAPAD

Spaced out

NovaLogic have licensed the use of their Voxel Space technology to American developers Argos Gameware. The software was originally



developed as a 3D rendering tool for use with the first version of *Comanche* in 1992, and allowed the manipulation of volume pixels – or 'voxels'. It's interesting in that the rest of the software development world is turning to 3D hardware, while Voxel Space isn't compatible with any 3D accelerator hardware. Games using it have always looked pixelly up close, and as you'll see from our *Armored Fist II* review in this issue, it's hardly stunning these days.

Sam & Max hit our screens

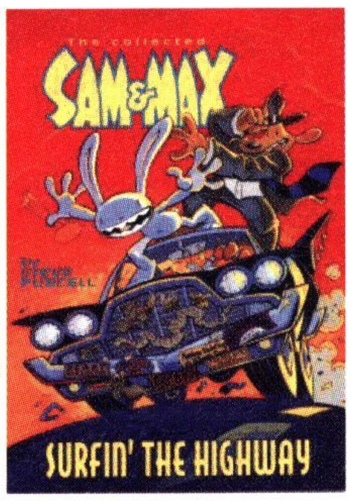


ZONE SPECIAL REPORT!

PC gaming legend's cartoon show set to rock UK screens next year. Charlie Brooker reports.

Point-and-click adventure fans worldwide fell to their knees and wept sweet salted tears of joy this week at the news that Sam and Max, erstwhile stars of LucasArts' seminal PC blockbuster, have been awarded their very own animated TV series. Described by its makers as "edgy, irreverent, impudent, insolent, impious and silly", the snappily-titled *Adventures Of Sam & Max: Freelance Police* boasts high production values and a healthy smattering of bizarre humour.

Featuring all the characters from creator Steve Purcell's excellent series of comic books, each of the 13 half-hour episodes consists of two separate adventures with characteristically unhinged and unpredictable storylines.



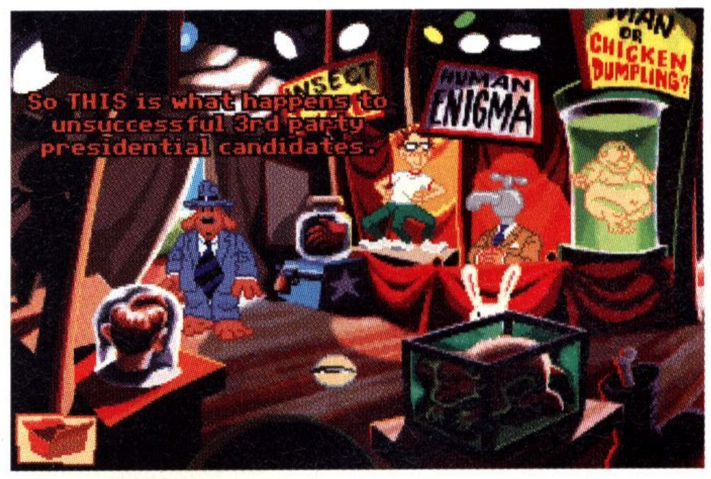
Fans of the game's deranged logic shouldn't be disappointed: scanning the episode synopses, we learn that among other shenanigans, our heroes will occasionally find themselves transported back in time to Victorian England, exploring a planet infested by giant rats and cockroaches, battling an aquatic zombie and a malevolent marionette from a 1950s US kiddy show, working for the French secret service, and even acting as marriage guidance counsellors to ancient Greek gods. In other words, it's weirder than *Teletubbies*, and it'll piss all over *He-Man* (which, allegedly, is something he pays big burly sailors to do every Friday down the docks. He rolls himself in flour first of course).

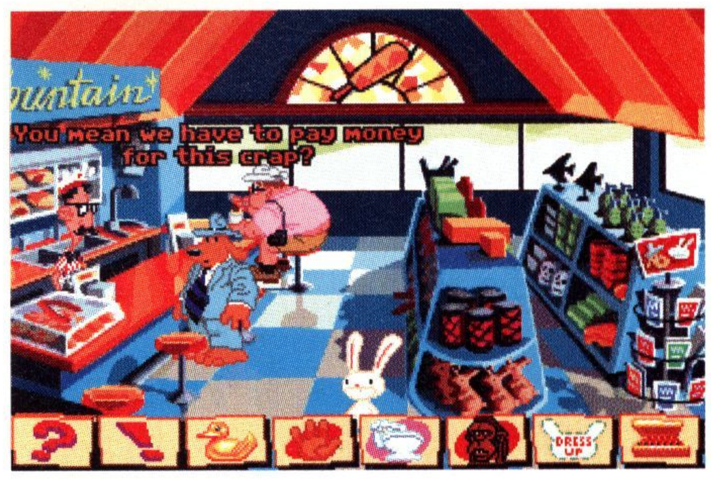
Your zuperzonic zizzling *Zone* is firmly assured that *Sam & Max* is due for a regular airing on the Murdoch-owned Fox Kids Network sometime early next year, although at the time of going to press a spokesman for the station could not (and indeed would not) confirm a date. If there's any justice in the world the show will rapidly be established a 'cult hit' and eventually transfer to BBC2 à la *Duckman*, *Ren & Stimpy*, and *The Simpsons*, so the sad Luddite masses without cable or satellite equipment can enjoy the spectacle without it being interrupted by gaudy adverts for *Buckaroo*, *Action Man*, and *My Little Flick-knife*. Better still, it'd be simply *ooh la la* if a resurgence of interest in the furry duo led to the creation of a *new* Sam & Max game. Eh, LucasArts? Assuming the sneak snippet recently gazed longingly at by we *Zoners* is anything to go by, *The Adventures Of Sam & Max: Freelance Police* could soon be considered compulsory viewing. If nothing else, it beats *Can't Cook Won't Cook* hands down (but then so does watching your arse grow hairs in a mirror). For more information, swerve your browser's steering wheel in the direction of the Nelvana Website (www.nelvana.com), the Sam & Max Homepage (www.swiss.ai.mit.edu/~dml/SamNMax/), or the Fox Kids lair (www.foxkids.com) – and if you're a PC gaming newcomer who has yet to savour the delights of the original point-and-clicker, may we gently remind you that it's available right now, as part of the Virgin White Label range, at a knock down price that only twats would sniff at? Yes? Good. Now look at the pictures. Z

The heady rise of the dizzy detectives from comic book to PC to TV.



All artwork © Steve Purcell





If you're not familiar with the insane comedy of *Sam & Max* on the PC, where have you been?

rotten 2 the core

FREE!
WORMS 2 DEMO FROM
www.worms2.com
THE WEBSITE FOR ALL THINGS WORMY

Worms addicts beware!

Those cute little **killers** are back in Worms 2. You'll get more chaos, more destruction, more **cartoony capers** and more **hysterical** late nights!

And there are unlimited ways of enjoying those invertebrate excesses: single-player, hot-seat (recommended), network or internet.

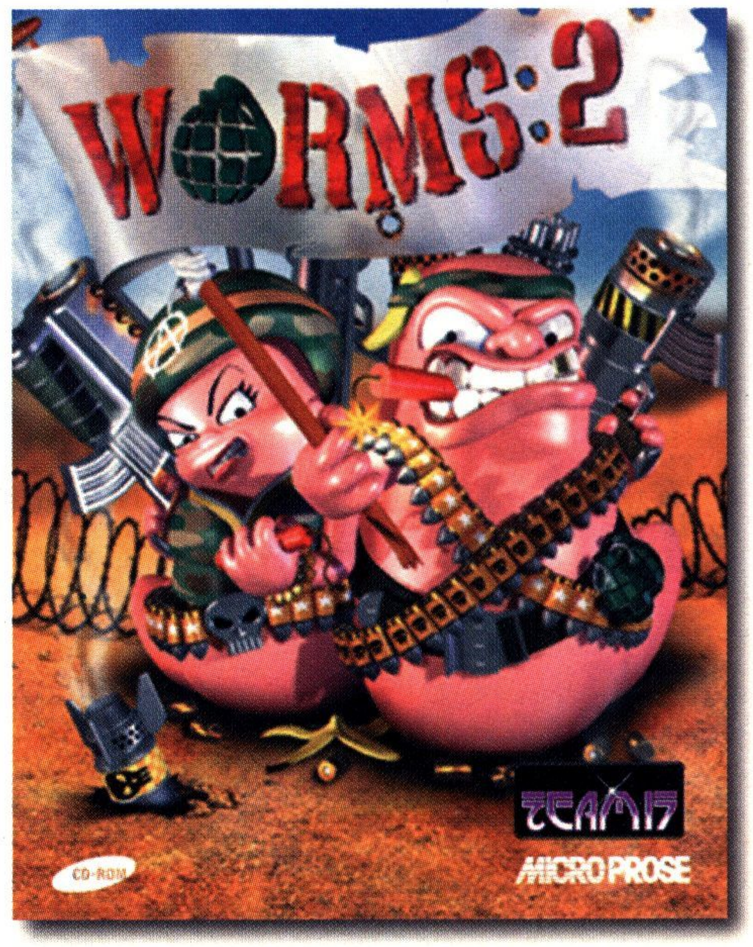
Humiliate your friends,
take **revenge** on your family,
annihilate complete strangers.

Worms 2 is frenetic, **frenzied** fun!

team 17
nice & juicy

CD-ROM

Worms 2. Bad apples in a barrel-load of laughs!



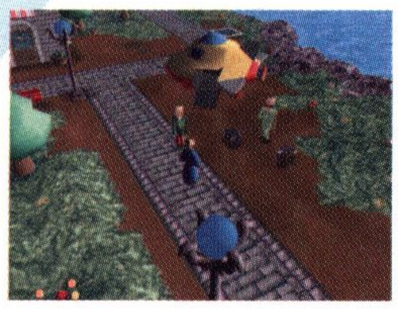
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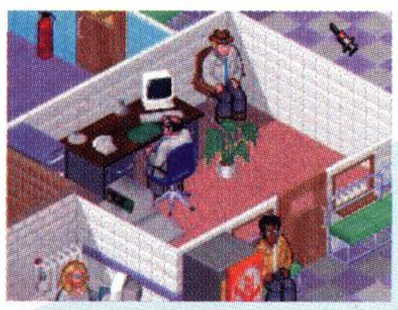
PC Zone Awards 97

Sponsored by CREATIVE CREATIVE LABS

PC ZONE READER AWARDS 1996/97





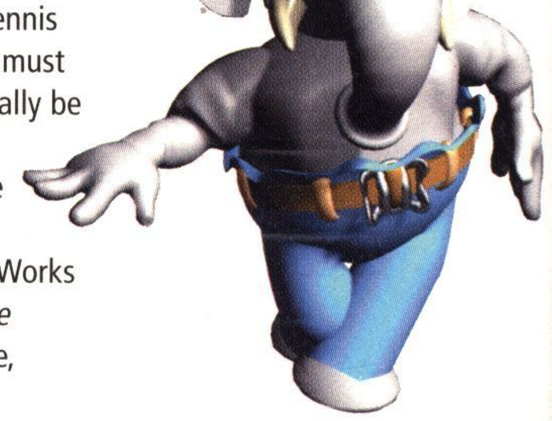


The response to the *PC Zone* Reader Awards has been so overwhelming that we've already got a good idea what games are breaking away from the pack. There's still time to vote though, so if you haven't done so, do it now!

WE'VE ALREADY STARTED TO COMPILE YOUR VOTES AND as expected certain games are already proving very popular. Not surprisingly, *Quake, Tomb Raider, C&C: Red Alert, X-COM 3, Diablo* and *Carmageddon* are all doing very well, as are *Age Of Empires, LBA 2, Hexen II* and *Actua Soccer*. There are also a few surprises, but we obviously can't reveal anything more until the awards night itself.

Remember, only PC games released over the past 12 months are eligible and you can vote for only one game in each category. We'll also be presenting a special Creative Labs Technology Award and a *PC Zone* Special Award which will be voted for internally by the staff and reviewers here at *PC Zone*.

You can vote either by using the form on this page, or by sending your nominations to our website (**pczone.co.uk**). Send your completed forms to *PC Zone* Awards Nominations, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ. All votes must reach us by the end of November. All forms will automatically be entered into our 'Build Your Own Dream Machine' prize sponsored by Creative Labs. Two lucky winners will receive an AWE64 Gold sound card, a Graphics Blaster Exxtreme Video Card, a PC-DVD Encore CD drive and a set of SoundWorks CSW 200 speakers. They will also be invited to the *PC Zone* Reader Awards night on 4 December at the Camden Palace, London as special VIP guests. Vote now.

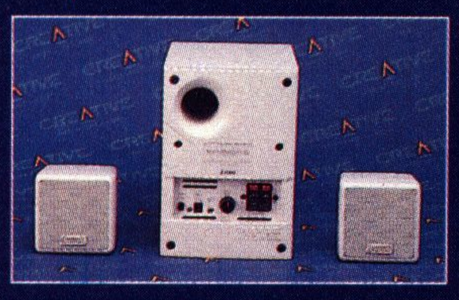


WIN!

Build Your Very Own Dream Machine with Creative Labs

Cambridge SoundWorks CSW 200 Speakers

Everybody knows that you're going to need a decent set of speakers if you want to get the most out of your machine as a games platform. With developers putting more emphasis on music and sound effects, having a set of gutless, battery operated speakers that you could use with your Walkman simply isn't good enough. What you need is a meaty bass unit that sits rumbling away on the floor and two crisp stereo speakers that pack a punch, but won't take up too much room on your desk. You need a set of SoundWorks CSW 200 speakers. Built using the finest components for superior performance, they'll transform your PC into a super-sonic centre of sound. The CSW 200 speakers cost £139 (inc. VAT). Contact Creative Labs on 01245 265 265 or point your browser at **www.creativelabs.com**.



Nomination form

PC ZONE

BEST ACTION GAME:

BEST ADVENTURE/RPG GAME:

BEST DRIVING GAME:

BEST PUZZLE GAME:

BEST FLIGHT SIMULATION GAME:

BEST SPORTS GAME:

BEST STRATEGY GAME:

GAME OF THE YEAR:

DEVELOPER OF THE YEAR:

PUBLISHER OF THE YEAR:

Name: Job title:

Address:

Postcode:

Daytime tel no:

☐ Please tick if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies.

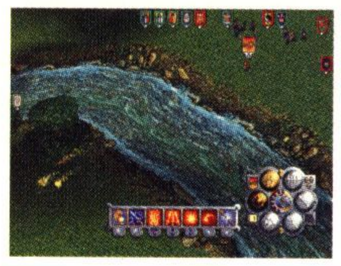
☐ Tick if under 18 years of age (we need to ask this question so that we do not mail inappropriate material to minors).

Terms and conditions: Postal entries with all questions answered correctly will be entered into the prize draw and winners will be selected at random after the closing date. The editor's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into and all winners will be notified by post. This competition is not open to employees of Dennis Publishing or participating companies. Only one entry per reader. No cash alternative will be offered. Submission of entry will be taken as acceptance of the rules.

DATAPAD

EA sign Dark Omen

If you're wondering what happened to *Warhammer: Dark Omen*, the latest title based on Games Workshop's tabletop wargame, then we'd best tell you that those foul-smelling goblin hordes at Electronic Arts have taken up the whip from Mindscape and are seeking an early 1998 release. Jon Gillard, Projects Manager at GW said (probably after fifty lashes); "We welcome the chance to work with Electronic Arts." *Dark Omen*, is a fantasy 3D real-time strategy game that boasts a non-linear campaign and more units than the *Zone* office monthly alcoholic intake. Expect a full review soon.



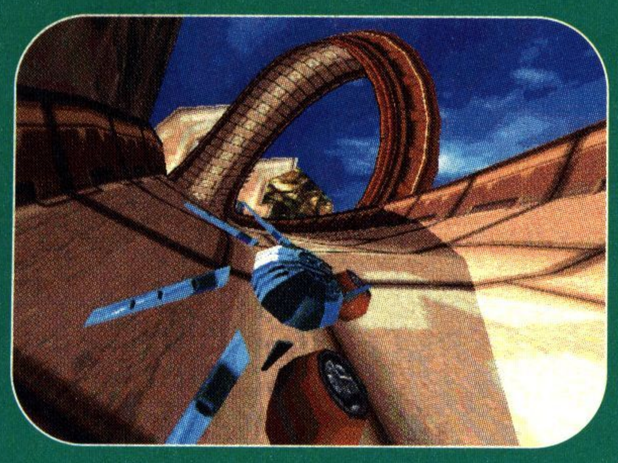
A lot more bovva with a hover

Hovery, floaty racing things in new futuristic racer from Europress.



You don't get many of those to the pound... etc. Steering with metal mammaries in *XLR8*.

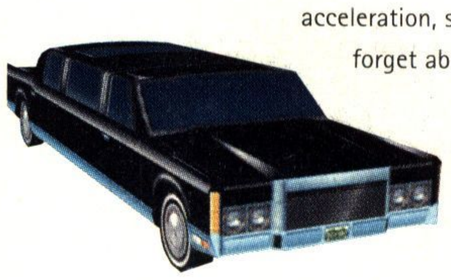
Guess what? Someone's doing a driving game. Europress, in fact. Obviously, they're going out on a bit of a limb here, into something of an untried area. But that's pioneers for you. Brain-dead sarcasm aside, it looks like it might be well worth a look. *XLR8*, as it's known, is a futuristic racey/shootie jobbie somewhat reminiscent of *WipEout*. (Not jobbie in the sense of cable, floater or number two, of course. Jobbie in the sense of – oh, never mind). It's set in the future, anyway. And you ride about on hovery, ultra-fast bike things. Produced by 3D specialist developers Speedworks, it uses their own proprietary 3D engine with real-time graphic processing throughout the game. There'll be several different worlds to race in – some reports say five, others eight – with stuff like corkscrews and jumps to negotiate, weapons and speed power-ups and the bikes have the expected range of different handling characteristics, weapons and so on. There'll be network support for up to eight players and it'll be out next April. Z

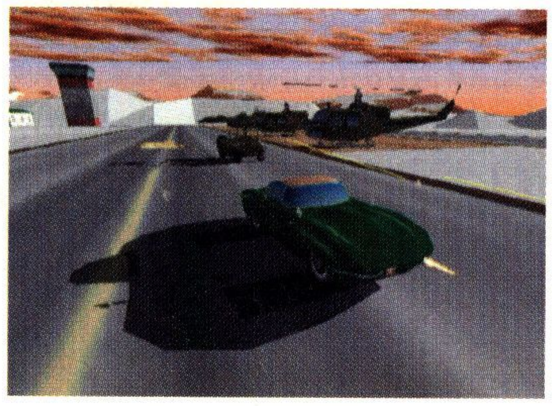


Get more kicks on Interstate '76

The Interstate '76 Nitro Pack sounds like one of them there add-on packs that we're so used to seeing these days, and in some ways it is. Sort of. The *Nitro Pack* is a stand-alone expansion pack that doesn't need the original game to get up and running. It will contain twenty new missions, nine new cars and three funky new cuts on the soundtrack into the bargain.

Graphically the game has been radically overhauled to take advantage of 3D acceleration, so hopefully we can all forget about the jerkiness of the original. The end result should be, as Samuel L. Jackson might say; "Kool and the Gang." Z





The game formerly known as...



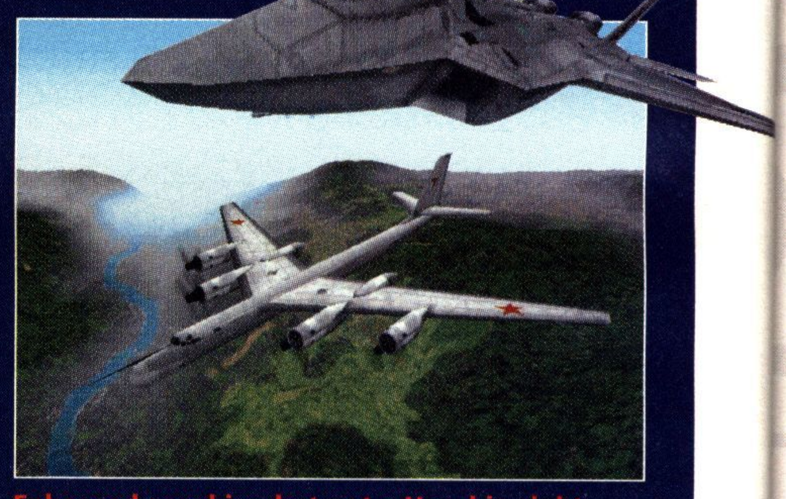
Interplay have plumbed for the name *Alien Intelligence*.

Interplay are going through a bit of indecision regarding the naming of their latest strategy game. As the game is based around vast empty spaces devoid of intelligence, the original name *Posh Spice* had to be dropped for libel reasons. After toying with *Dead Spice* they changed it to *Dead Space* and then played safe and changed it completely to *Alien Intelligence*, which seems to be the current favourite.

Whatever they finally decide, you can be sure of finding the familiar mix of shipbuilding, terraforming and research with a considerable dose of planetary and space combat. Get all the latest at **www.interplay.com**. Z

All-new official F-22

We've got a ™ and we're gonna use it...



Enhanced graphics, but not a Voxel in sight – *F22 Raptor* looks great even without 3Dfx.

Fresh from doing battle with the US military in the wacky world of trademark litigation, Voxel Space specialists and long-time anti-3Dfxers, NovaLogic, have announced the latest in a stream of F-22 simulations, *The Raptor*.

Intended as a more serious brother to the *Lightning* series (otherwise known as *F-22 Lite*), *F-22 Raptor* has been designed in conjunction with the expert warmongers at Lockheed Martin to try and get as much accuracy into the flight model as possible. It will also carry the official Lockheed logo to help add that extra level of sycophancy… sorry, authority.

Raptor still won't bow down to the great god 3Dfx, at least at first – gratuitous lens flares only coming with a second version of the game. It will play to all the on-line freaks though, with a NovaLogic server allowing 100 bitter Air Force rejectees to slug it out with each other at any time. *Raptor* is set for a February release. Z



actua SOCCER 2

One game even Shearer cannot miss...



Forget everything else this season. Actua Soccer 2 brings you true football on Sony PlayStation and PC CD-ROM.

Using the superb editing facility, you can create your own side, players and kits to match against some of the world's best teams.

Barry Davies is joined in the commentary box by Trevor Brooking while the young Liverpool superstar Michael Owen provides superb player movement and action.

For the ultimate test, take on Alan Shearer's All Star XI, chosen by the man himself.

THE ONE AND ONLY GAME FOR TRUE FOOTBALL FANS



In-Game shots taken from the PC version

actua SPORTS SERIES

PlayStation

PC CD-ROM

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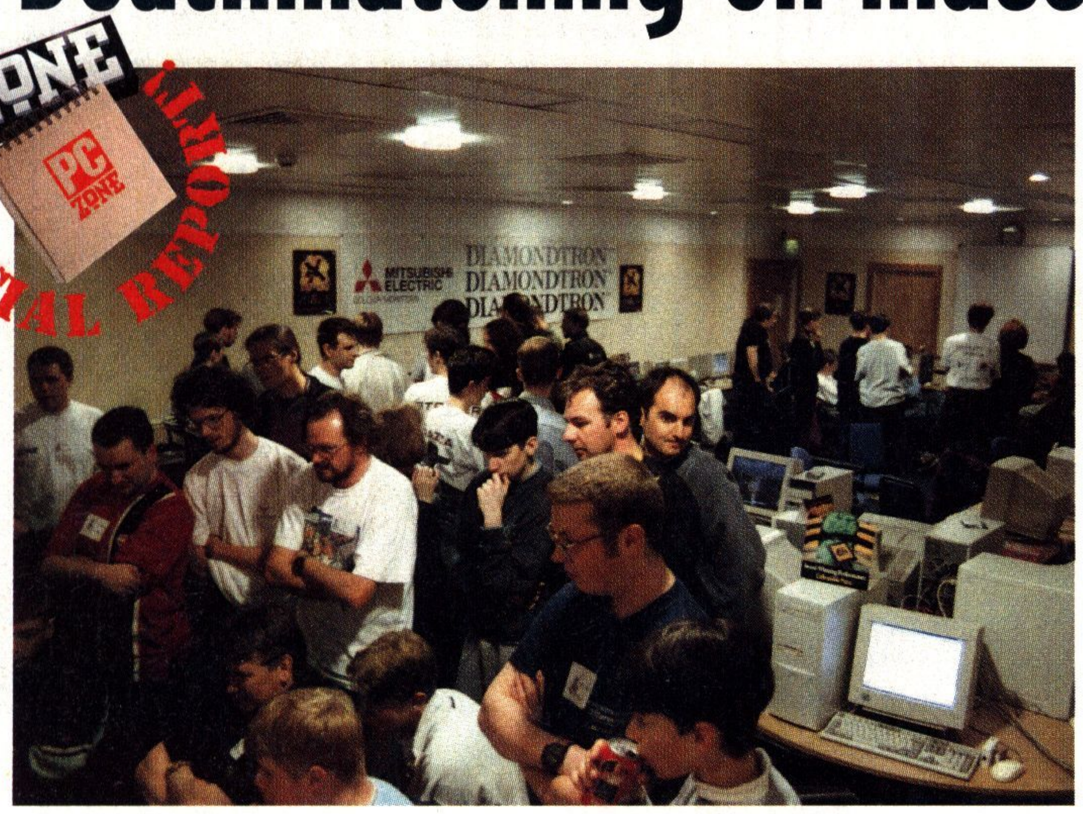
DATAPAD

Blood 2 whispers...

Blood may not have been the most technically advanced game when it was first released a couple of months ago, but it was a heck of a lot of fun to play nonetheless. Who can forget the crazed monks shrieking, "I need teepee for my bumhole"? Or the napalm launcher, and the excellent 'train' level? But ultimately who could forget – never mind 'forgive' – Monolith's use of the well-old *Duke Nukem 3D* Build graphics engine? Let's face it: it hasn't stood the test of time particularly well.



Deathmatching en mass



The Apex European Hotel in Edinburgh was the place to be on Saturday 25 October. Why? For the second 'Gathering', of course. Joe Lampard reports.



Four months on from the original 'Gathering of the Clans' we were ready for 'The Gathering II' (after much preparing, phoning, sorting, blagging and begging). It took place in the shiny new surroundings of the Apex European Hotel in Edinburgh, with around 100 attendees and 64 networked PCs, and was the largest *Quake* LAN party held in the UK to date.

"The first people started arriving with their PCs at around 8, keen to get set up," explained Paul Younger, co-founder of Reality-X in Edinburgh. "We had entrants from all over Scotland, as well as quite a few from down South as well."

The day's main event was a big one-on-one competition, which saw 64 contestants deathmatching furiously through numerous knockout rounds for a top prize of £500, kindly donated by Cyrix and VideoLogic. The eventual winner was CeNoBiTe (aka Andrew Bell) from Lenzie, who gave the ubiquitous Chris McGregor (*PC Zone* Games Champ '97) an absolute hammering in a best-of-three final – do we really need to tell you that you can't swim in lava, Chris? We were then treated to a Catch The Flag tourney and a massive two-on-two deathmatch competition. After much mouse hammering and shouts of "Suck it down!", deciders were played and prizes given out. After that there was a raffle, and prizes galore meant that everyone who turned up received at least a piece of software to take home – not bad for a £10 entry fee.





Chris McGregor (left) shakes the hand of overall winner CeNoBiTe (Andy Bell).

"It was a superb day. We had a good turn out and there was some hard competition – but most importantly it really was a great laugh," commented John Hurst, from Reality-X in Durham. "Thanks to all the sponsors and everyone who helped out and took part. We're already planning the next Gathering, and it's going to be even bigger and better, so watch this space." Head for **http://www.reality-x.co.uk** for more information. Z

Ultimate Civ II



Undeterred by the fact that Sid's left the company, MicroProse are set to release two more *Civ II* related titles in an effort to keep the brand alive until *Civ III* reaches us some time next year.

Ultimate Civ II is a new 32-bit Windows 95-native multi-player version of the classic turn-based strategy fest that allows up to seven players to compete over a LAN or via the Internet. New options include timed moves, open/closed protection and negotiation screens that allow players to talk with each other when it's not their turn. It's also a lot quicker and more stable than the dogged *Civ Net*.

Also on the way is *Civ II – Fantastic Worlds*, an add-on CD with a comprehensive scenario editor that allows the player to totally customise the game, plus 20 new campaigns ranging from Atlantis and Dino World to Jules Verne and *X-COM*. Both titles are due out by Christmas; check out **www.microprose.com** for more info. Z

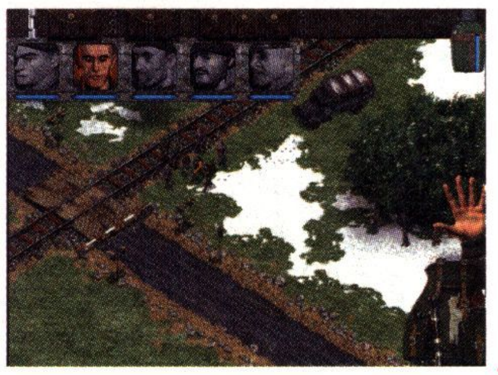
Donkey-free zone

ZONE EXCLUSIVE

Unpronounceable Spanish development team Proein are currently working on another addition to the growing line of real-time strategy games (although, obviously, they stop every afternoon for a few hours' kip). Called *Commandos: Behind Enemy Lines*, it's set in WWII and has you controlling a bunch of... well, commandos. Behind enemy lines. The AI gives the men under your command human senses and different personalities (including cowardly characters). The varied missions take place in four different countries with differing terrain, and from what we've seen the graphics have been nicely put together. It's looking very promising for lovers of sneakiness but sadly, despite its Spanish background, there won't be any donkeys to hurl. Z



***Commandos* from Eidos: a Spanish game, but sadly rather donkey-less.**



Thankfully we can now sleep soundly at night, safe in the knowledge that the sequel, *Blood 2*, will be a glorious 3D polygon-a-rama, with massive gobs of blood and body parts flying in directions that defy the laws of gravity. Heaps more gore has been promised, plus some incredible new monsters described by James Wilson, Project Leader, as "some of the most disgusting I've ever seen". We only hope that the BBFC don't chop the game to bits when it comes out in the middle of next year.

Monolith are keeping all other details close to their chest, but promise more cheesy horror flick humour and to 'leak out' further details and screenshots "as soon as they're ready". Follow the game's progress in *PC Zone*, or try **www.lith.com** for more gory details.



Sweet smell of Psygnosis





(Left) *Häagen Daas Racing*, sorry, *Newman Haas Racing*. (Above) Doin' Jobz for tha Mob in the forthcoming *Respect Inc.*

Psygnosis weren't kidding when they said they were going to step up their PC development programme – as these new announcements confirm.

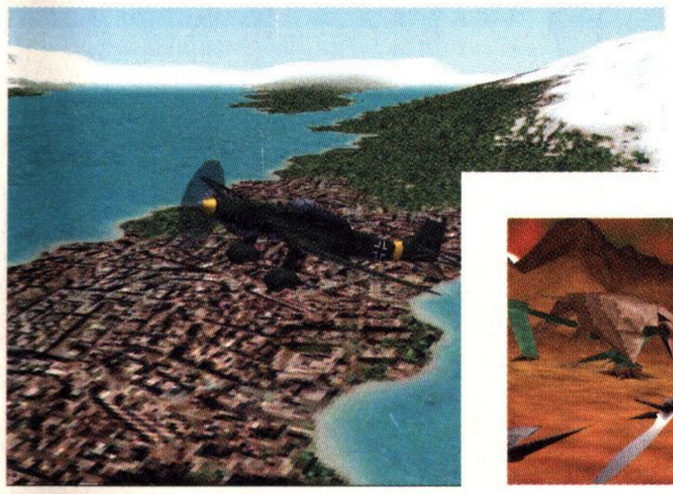
Hey, it's all go in Liverpool. The dockers may be striking, but there's still plenty of rough-and-tumble adult fun to be had, courtesy of the increasingly prolific Psygnosis. First, we've been granted a visual update on the progress of *Respect, Inc* – the cartoon *Goodfellas* – in the form of an ethereal handful of spanking new screenshots. Mind your eyes on those corners – they're sharp.

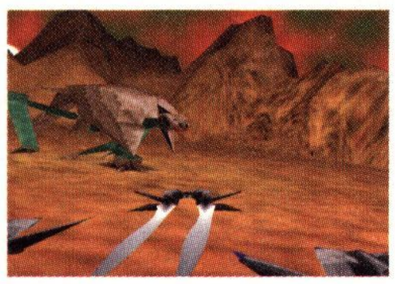
Also released is a shot from *Sentinel Returns*, the long overdue sequel to Geoff Crammond's legendary old-skool masterpiece which first made BBC Micro-owning spods leak 'bloke soup' into their pants way back in 1985. Easily one of the most surreal and chilling games ever created, *Sentinel* defies all attempts at concise description – still, that's the price you pay for being an absorbing exercise in metaphysical strategy rather than a beach volleyball simulator. Not only does the sequel promise greatly enhanced visuals and subtly improved gameplay, but incredibly (and fittingly), the soundtrack is being produced by none other than John Carpenter of *Hallowe'en* and *The Thing* fame. *Sentinel Returns* is due for release in the spring of 1998 – we only hope it won't have been battered beyond all recognition upon the anvil of false progress. Ooh, hark at us. La-di-da.

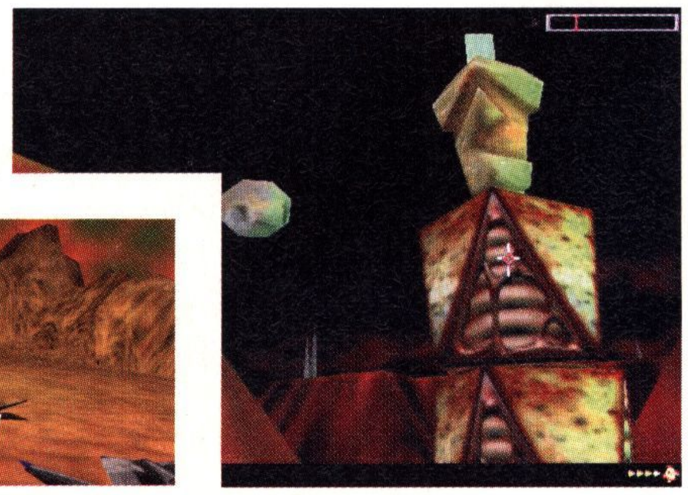
Psygnosis haven't stopped there. Three entirely new titles have also been announced, the first of which is *Tellurian Defender*, a 3D space combat game with a terrifyingly high minimum spec and a predictably trite storyline about warring alien races and a raggle-taggle band of survivors, the gory details of which we won't trouble you with because We Know You're Not Really Interested. Its makers claim that *Tellurian Defender* is set to be the first in a trilogy of increasingly sophisticated spacebound epics, which will "eventually [culminate] in a continually on-line universe". Yeah, and I can slice cheese with my arse. Anyway, it looks cute and the multi-player angle has potential, so make sure you keep 'em peeled.

Next up is *Newman Haas Racing*, an IndyCar motoring sim developed in conjunction with the Newman Haas racing team, who are dead famous (well, among racing fans). The pre-release hoo-hah promises an abundance of hi-octane, hi-res white knuckle realism, with multiple camera angles, running commentary, and acres of accurate stats all adding to the four-wheeled fun. We say: it's a car game. You drive a car round a bunch of tracks. We'll tell you if it's any good as soon as we know.

Finally, we cast an eye over *Wings Of Destiny*, a flight sim set in WWII. With firm emphasis placed on dogfighting and derring-do, coupled with historically accurate flight models, the game offers players the chance to fight on the side of either Allies or Bastards, with each following a "different but parallel" storyline, culminating in "a shocking revelation". Who can say what that will be? Z







(Above) *Wings Of Destiny*: Psygnosis attempt to enter the combat sim market in style. (Above centre) *Tellurian Defender* is packed with graphical bells and whistles. (Above right) *Sentinel Returns* shot.

Anachronox unveiled



First conceptuals from Tom Hall's *Anachronox* have just come through. What do you reckon?

Information surrounding Tom Hall's new *Quake*-engined RPG, *Anachronox*, has started to filter through. Hall, known for his work on *Doom* and *Duke Nukem 3D*, is currently in the early stages of the game's design, an RPG that hails back to the classic days of the *Ultima* series.

Although the *Quake* engine is powering everything, the game's view is an isometric one, allowing the 3D character modelling to be shown off to its best effect. All the traditional RPG elements are going to be included, so we can all look forward to immersing ourselves in multi-character parties, deep and intricate storylines and full motion video sequences that use the same engine as the game (similar to the recent *Zerstorer* TC for *Quake*).

Anachronox is just the first in a possible trilogy of RPGs using a similar engine, and although little is known of the storyline yet, it's expected to take a futuristic bent and be packed with humour. But you'll have to wait a while, as Christmas 1998 is the current projected release date. We'll bring you more news as we get it. Z





Hall's characters may draw influence from classic comic art and Club International.

There are but two ways you will ever play in the Open Championship:

1. Qualify
2. Buy this Game

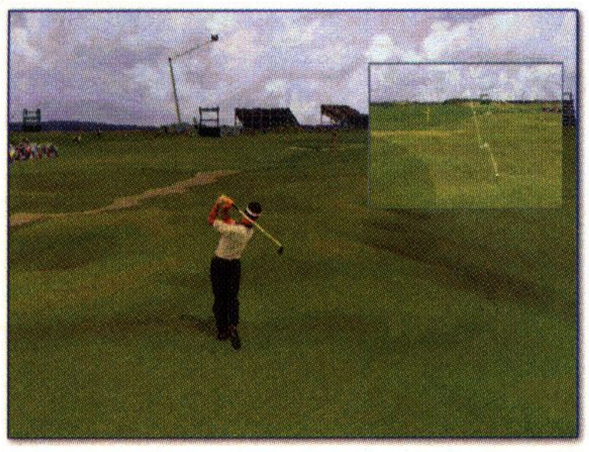
Now you can experience every thrill of the world's oldest and greatest championship, right at your computer.

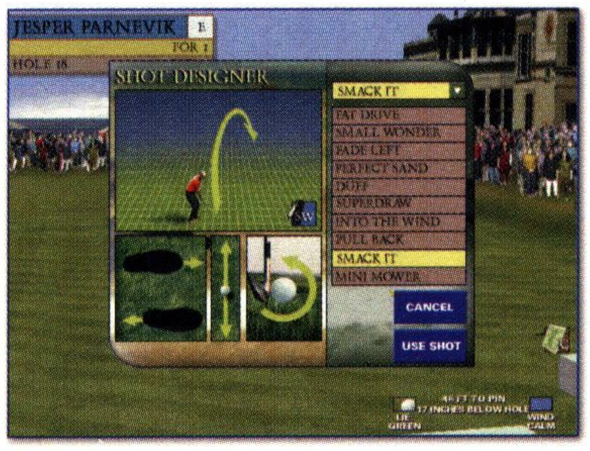
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Played on the finest digital recreation of Scotland's oldest and most challenging links - you'll face the towering *Hell Bunker*, the treacherous *Valley of Sin* and all the deep rough and monster greens on The Old Course at St Andrews & Royal Troon.

If you have a PC running Windows 95 and a sound card, you're qualified, so now play your best shot to win the Open Championship!







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DATAPAD

And then came Muzzle Velocity

Muzzle Velocity is a real-time action/strategy game based in WWII where the player can jump from an overhead strategy view into a 3D perspective and take control of tanks or foot soldiers under their command. Fighting for either side, the campaigns basically take place across cities, forests and fields in every kind of weather condition you could think up. With over 140 missions to it, it looks like *Muzzle Velocity* could be a bit of a bargain, especially as you should be able to pick it up at any good retailer for the very reasonable sum of £19.99. Published by ZABLAC, *Muzzle Velocity* is available now. So don't delay. Check **www.digi4fun.com** for more details.

Jack up Adrenix

Provocatively-titled developers Playmates Interactive are taking on the world of first-person action games with *Adrenix*. A futuristic tale of medical experimentation, global infection, evil corporations and One Man Against The Enemy, *Adrenix* puts you in a nippy little fighter craft with the task of rescuing your kidnapped daughter. The twist is that you've been injected with the 'Adrenix' drug which sharpens your reactions and accelerates your healing process – but also shortens your life span.

An official distributor has yet to be signed, but the current rumours are pointing strongly towards Interplay. We'll let you know as soon as we hear the full story.

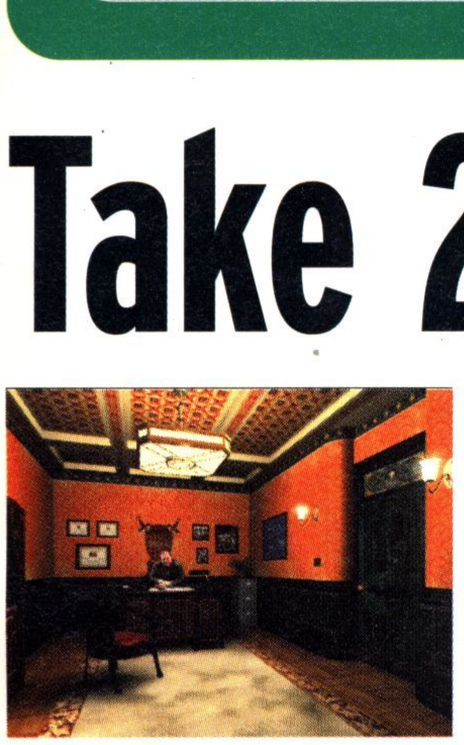


Smell the what?

***Puma World Football 98* is not, as you might imagine, a *Bedknobs & Broomsticks*-style cartoon animal soccer romp.** It's Ubi Soft's upcoming footie game, mentioned before in these pages, but it's now had a name change. It has 358 teams from all over the world (even Scotland) with more than 6000 real players and options to play leagues, cups, European competitions and custom tournaments. Commentary is by Sky sports "guru" (that's what it says on the press release – they seem to have mistyped "git") Martin Tyler. The sales pitch reads: "So real you can almost smell the turf." What are these people on?



Take 2's two



Black Dahlia is the latest Take 2 interactive movie to star Dennis Hopper. Wartime Cleveland is the setting for this dark adventure where the 'Torso Murderer' – a man who goes around chopping up the midriff of his victims – leaves a trail of clues for you, playing a young government agent, to follow up. Across 70 locations over Europe and America, your investigation and search for the killer will cover a five-year period. Fans of Mission Studio's *Jetfighter* series should be pleased to hear that Take 2 are also releasing *Jetfighter: Full Burn*, an enhanced version of the game. Using an updated graphics engine gameplay will centre around attempts to stop a renegade Russian general from taking over Norwegian oil reserves. Take 2 tell us there'll be a detailed cinematic storyline running through two campaigns and almost 100 extra missions spread over four CDs. Priced £34.99, *Jetfighter: Full Burn* should be out in time for Christmas.



(Above left) *Black Dahlia* – starring Dennis Hopper. (Left) More *Jetfighter* missions.

Journeyman journeys back



Red Orb Entertainment announce the signing of Presto's third *Journeyman Project* outing. The rest of the world asks: "yeah - and?"

Good news for fans of the graphic-intensive *Journeyman Project* series (both of them) – a new title's on the way from Red Orb Entertainment. *Legacy Of Time* furthers the time-travelling exploits of Agent 5 of the Temporal Security Agency and his never-ending quest to obtain widespread gaming appeal.

Using the familiar *Myst*-style adventure interface, *Legacy* takes the player on a journey through long lost civilisations such as Atlantis, Ancient China and Lewisham. One unique feature is the player's ability to 'borrow' other characters' identities in order to blend into his surroundings – which should put a stop to ancient Greeks saying, "Look, that man's wearing a strange futuristic piece of body armour. Pass the amphora."

More information and screenshots from the game can be obtained from the (rather nice actually) *Legacy Of Time* website at **www.journeyman3.com**.



More pre-rendered antics in Presto's *Journeyman Project III*. Hopefully it'll be better than one and two.

DATAPAD

Another Disney Christmas

It wouldn't be Christmas without something 'nice' to give the kids from the last bastion of all things good and proper: Disney – unless you plump for that Buena Vista (ie Disney) classic *Pulp Fiction*, which the kids'll no doubt love... But seriously, if you're a reader with kids and want to keep them occupied this Chrimbo, buy them Disney's Classic Games (Vol. 1, £29.99). *The Lion King*, *Aladdin* and *The Jungle Book* are so enjoyably simple the young 'uns will smash at the keyboard for hours, emitting eardrum-piercing screams as the 'little men' run across the screen. Remember, we said 'occupied' – not 'quiet'.



THE MAN WHO KNOWS



Rumours, resignations and restructuring, mither at Microsoft, and of course the omnipotent Lara Croft. It's that man again...

It's official. World gone mad. In recent issues, a number of column inches have been dedicated to the exploits of the pneumatic adventuress, **Lara Croft**, while vaguely managing to keep a grasp on the fact that she doesn't actually exist. It seems that not everyone has this facility for thought, with comic book makers, **Top Cow Productions**, set to produce a special one-off featuring Eidos Interactive's tomb raider herself, as well as their own less well-known character, the magic gauntlet-wielding **Witchblade**. The art will be provided by regular Witchblade penciller, Michael Turner, but it is interesting that the head of Top Cow, **Marc Silvestri**, was responsible for creating the main characters for Eidos' *Fighting Force*. Should you be interested, the release of the comic will coincide with that of ***Tomb Raider 2***.

Returning to more cloak-and-dagger matters, there are rumblings at **Acclaim** following the news that **Fergus** and **Kevin McGovern**, the founders of development house **Probe**, have left the company. There have also been movements at one of Acclaim's other developers, **Sculptured Software**, as co-founder, **George Mestos** and vice-president of development, **Kelly Zmack**, are no longer with the outfit. The company itself no longer has its name. It has been redubbed **Iguana West**; Iguana being Acclaim's third major developer.

Gone. **Timothy Gerritsen**, the producer of ***MechWarrior III***, has walked out on **FASA Interactive**, an internal development team responsible for the Mech licence. They have been working on the game for over a year, and it has now been handed back to **MicroProse**, with the team either run up the path or assigned to other FASA projects, including *MechCommander* and *Shadowrun*.

Activision have been living it up following the financial results for their second fiscal quarter. Compared with the same period last year, revenues increased from $19million to $32million, with profits doubled to $2million. This was largely due to the success of ***Hexen II*** and ***Dark Reign***, and Chrimbo should earn them some more dollarage with the release of ***Quake II***, ***Heavy Gear*** and ***Zork Grand Inquisitor***. Give me all of your money.

Seemingly, Activision's success hasn't gone unnoticed, and if rumours are to be believed, they are set to be **Electronic Arts'** next acquisition as they continue their relentless assimilation of the software industry. In response to the story, Activision offered a curt "no comment" while EA managed "we don't offer comments on industry rumours." Thanks. Further probing yielded the word "erroneous" from the tightlipped Activision camp, although industry analyst, **James Lin**, spouted "That rumour's been floating around for about four weeks. It would be logical. I don't think Bobby Kotick [Activision's chairman, CEO and president] would sell to anyone but a big player like EA."

Big Bad Billy Boy Gates could face the minor financial inconvenience of a £625,000-a-day fine if US Attorney General, **Janet Reno**, gets her way. Ms Reno's Justice Department is claiming that by bundling Internet Explorer with Windows 95, Microsoft are waging unfair competition against their rivals. Reno bleated, "Microsoft is unlawfully taking advantage of its Windows monopoly to protect and extend that monopoly and undermine consumer choice." She wants Microsoft to inform Windows 95 users that other Internet browsers are available. In a statement, Gates retorted, "A fundamental principle at Microsoft is that Windows gets better and makes the PC easier to use with each new version. Today people want to use PCs to access the Internet. We are providing that functionality in Windows, and providing a platform for innovation by thousands of other software companies. It would be a great disservice to our customers if Microsoft did not enhance Windows with Internet-related features, and rapidly distribute updated versions of Windows through PC manufacturers." Too kind, Bill, too kind.

Further news of **Senator Fairclough** and his crusade remove all games from US government computers. Legislators decreed his bill too expensive to enforce, but his fight continues and many government agencies have taken to wiping hard disks of their own accord. NB Other gossip columns are available.

PlayStation racers make tracs





(Left) More jet bike hovery, floaty things in Singletrac's forthcoming *Jet Moto*. (Above) Watch out for that big pointy arrow, you fool!

Phew – made it! Just in time to get this last-minute bit of news into the magazine. Pant. Wheeze. Cough. Splutter...

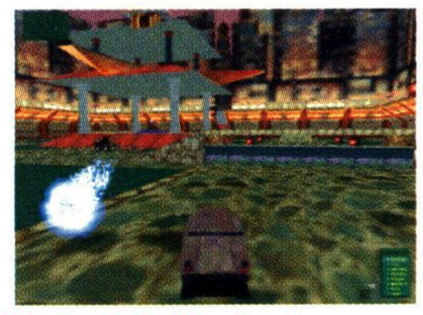
That much-neglected gaming genre, the console racing game, has spawned two forthcoming PC titles, both of which make full use of 3Dfx and Rendition cards and both of which come from new developers on the block, Singletrac.

Jet Moto puts you in control of a futuristic all-terrain hover vehicle and forces you to race over graphically impressive water, desert, canyon and street tracks. You even get a grappling hook device to make really tight turns with...(just like in *Rocket Jockey*). *Twisted Metal 2*, on the other hand, gives you more traditional vehicles to control, but does load them full of weapons and lets you go at your opponents in destructive style.

Both games are expected to push the graphics cards to their limits, are fully network-compatible (eight for *Twisted Metal 2* and 16 for *Jet Moto*) and should be released by the end of this year via industry Hungry Hippo, GT Interactive. Z







(Above left) Looking a bit like a 3D *GTA*: *Twisted Metal 2*. (Top right) A windmill yesterday.

You read it here first

Our industry spies bring news of the following as the magazine goes to press... Reports from a number of US sources have uncovered details of two new *Babylon 5* titles currently in development at Sierra. Apparently the first will be a strategically-enhanced space shoot 'em up, and the second a 'multimedia' companion (urgh!).

Redneck Rampage: Suckin' Grits On Route 66 – a new Interplay-sanctioned add-on for *Redneck Rampage* featuring Big Billy's World Famous Gut Bustin' Brewery, Billy the Beer-Drinkin' Goat and The Texas Chicken Ranch – may never get a release in this country we've been told. Pester Interplay if you give a hoot.

Cyclone, the development studio that brought the world *Uprising*, and have announced that they're also working on a game called *Requiem: Wrath of the Fallen*, have leaked more names of on-going, in-house projects. Apparently we'll also see *Third Domain* and *Battlesport II* from them at some point in the future.

Finally, next issue we're hoping – at long last – to bring you news and shots of the new *Alien Resurrection* game from Fox Interactive. So come on Fox – let's see what it looks like... Z

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the chips are down

and you're almost out of metaphors.

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HOT Shots

Rage Software are currently 'pushing the envelope' of graphical splendour with their tipped-for-the-top new game *Incoming*. You 'nudge fabric' in anticipation while pouring over these new shots... And you may have noticed that *Daikatana*'s back too. You'll have to go and change those kecks now.

Daikatana (Ion Storm/Eidos)

Oh ye of little faith – doubting Ion Storm's *Daikatana* at such an early stage of development. You know who you are. But anyway, you're wrong to doubt. We've seen how it's coming along, and – having had an extra few months development time (remember, the game's slipped to April) – John Romero and his team have forged a game that looks certain to become a bit of a classic. Graphically, *Daikatana* is extremely complex – even looking a bit like *Quake II* in places, even though it uses *Quake* technology. We'll be back with a more in-depth preview next issue.











Flying Nightmares 2 (Eidos Interactive)

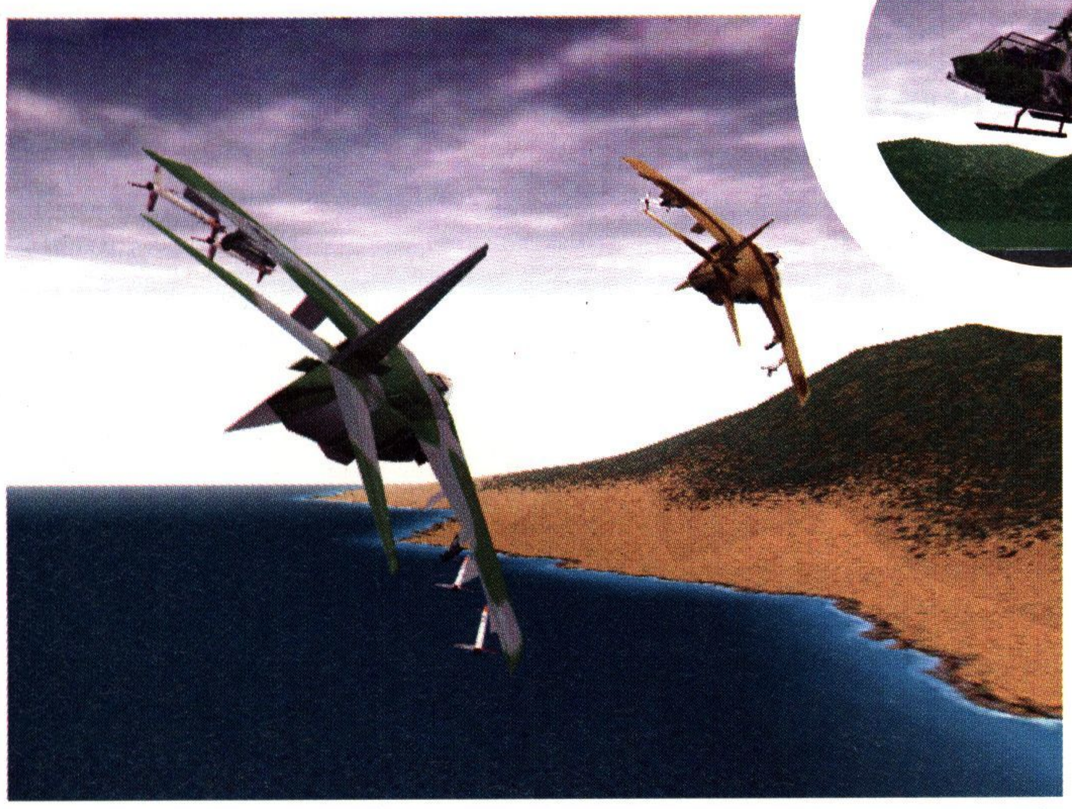
As you can see, Eidos' latest flight sim is coming on a treat – which is no surprise as it utilises all manner of graphical gadgetry to rub up ones gaming G-spot. Seeing as it was produced by a Gulf War chopper jock and helped along by his test pilot chums, we can expect realism and action in equal measure.

The strategy interface – called 'Commandant' – will allow players to direct their units while they are actually flying around. It'll be a simple affair but shouldn't get in the way of the action. We'll be reviewing the finished product next month.







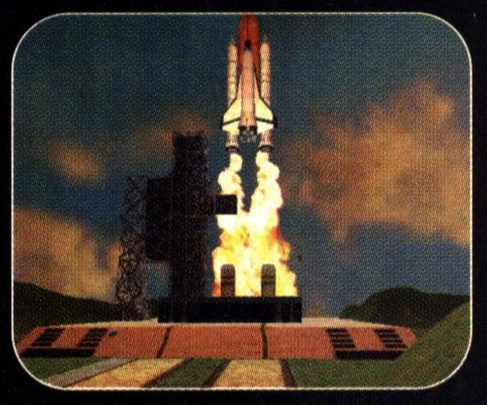




Incoming (Rage)







The game itself

***Incoming*, as you may have read here before, is a fast-moving action game, and not a strategy/action game as some magazines reported recently. The player will control a number of high-powered mobile weapons (and some non-mobile ones too), including a Comanche, and an AV 8B night-capable Harrier. Rage assure us that much care has been taken over the flight and physics models, even though the game is being balanced as a full-blown shoot 'em up. 42 missions will be seamlessly inter-cut with real-time cut scenes (balls to FMV) and a lot of testing is scheduled for the game's 'deathmatch' features. We await with interest.**







Let's get technical

Rage are going for broke with their recommended specs for *Incoming*, and as a result this game should be as cutting-edge as it gets when it hits our screens in February. *Incoming*'s target platform is: P166 with a 4Mb accelerator card minimum. Don't panic though – that's standard at the moment.

Those of us with more powerful hardware will be able to push it to the limit nevertheless. *Incoming* will work with AGP compatibles (ATi Rage Pro), as Intel recently demonstrated on a 'tour' with their next generation AGP graphics technology. It'll also use MMX, as well as run in native 3Dfx and PowerVR. In fact, *Incoming* will work with bloody everything – even Vectrex*.

* – This is a blatant lie.

HOT Shots

Deathtrap Dungeon (Eidos)

Time to return to those dank and dingy corridors of ye olde *Deathtrap Dungeon* to see how it's coming along. And, says our crystal ball, it's just as vibrant and virile as it ever was. Ian Livingston and his team at Eidos have spiced things up a bit – adding a few more large-breasted, sword-wielding ladies, more bizarre weapons and more truly disgusting monsters. More of everything, in fact. Our man Prezzer's been keeping up-to-date with the project and tells us that it's looking extremely good from what he's seen. Eidos reckon it'll be finished soon – we'll have a review for you next issue.











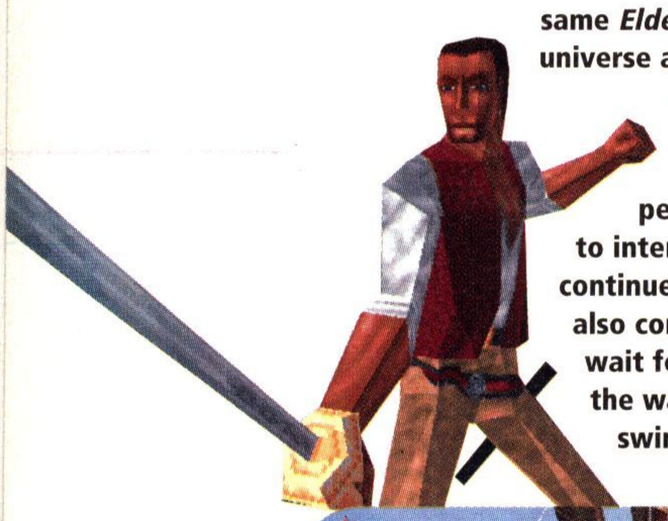
Redguard (Bethesda Softworks/Virgin)

Bethesda Softworks (in true Lucas-ian fashion) are hard at work on a trilogy of games set long before their previous RPG epics *Arena* and *Daggerfall*. One of these, *Redguard* is expected to arrive next spring – soon after the arrival of their other adventure *Battlespire* – and will be based in and around the same *Elder Scrolls* universe as the other games.

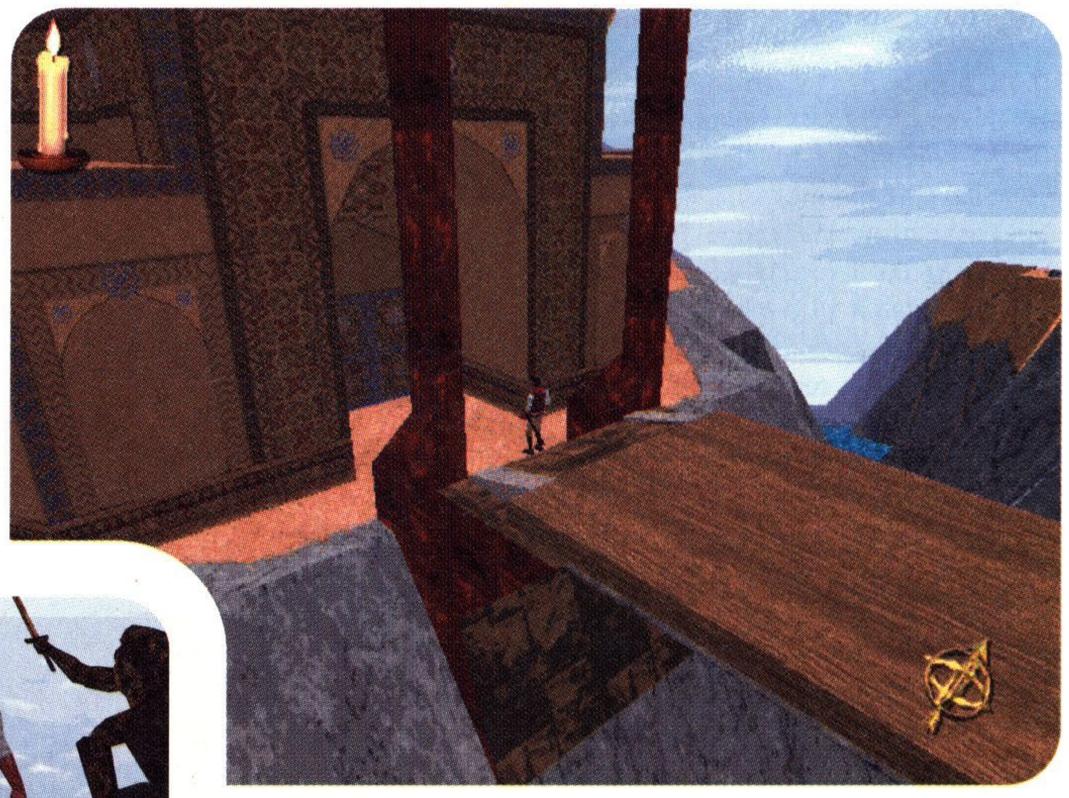
As you can see, the developers have plumped for a third-person perspective and have promised loads of 3D characters to interact with and monsters to slice up. And, just to continue the thinly-veiled *Star Wars* analogy, players will also control a nice young hero-type bloke in search of – wait for it – his little sister (who he no doubt snogs on the way then realises it's her later on...). Expect lots of swinging across chasms and sword fights as well.

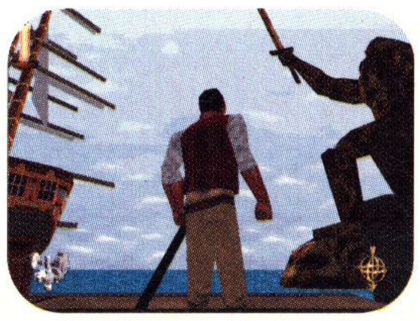












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PC ZONE our price CHART Predictions

Welcome to *PC Zone*'s version of *The Chart Show*, sponsored by Our Price. Each month it'll feature the titles we think will be flying off the shelves in the coming weeks, and it will also play host to exclusive news and competitions.

1 **QUAKE II** *(Activision)* ***£34.99***



2 **BLADERUNNER** *(Virgin Interactive)* ***£34.99***



3 **TOMB RAIDER II** *(Eidos Interactive)* ***£34.99***



4 **MONKEY ISLAND 3** *(LucasArts/Virgin)* ***£34.99***



5 **FIFA 98** *(EA Sports)* ***£34.99***



6 **WORMS 2** *(Ocean)* ***£34.99***



7 **STARCRAFT** *(Sierra)* ***£34.99***



8 **DUNGEON KEEPER: DEEPER DUNGEONS** *(Electronic Arts)* ***£19.99***



9 **WING COMMANDER: PROPHECY** *(Electronic Arts)* ***£34.99***



10 **JEDI KNIGHT: DARK FORCES II** *(LucasArts/VIE)* ***£34.99***



FOR CD-ROM LOVERS, THIS IS THE STRONGEST CHRISTMAS CHART THERE'S BEEN FOR a while, with some excellent titles including *Quake II* and *Bladerunner* dominating the top positions. Their creative gameplay and special effects ensure non-stop entertainment, making them perfect for those long winter evenings and any gift dilemmas you might have.

Lara Croft is also back with a vengeance in *Tomb Raider II*, so if you enjoyed the variety and challenge of the first version, don't forget to check out the new graphics and games levels.

To take part in this month's Our Price Top 10 prize giveaway, just put pen to paper, answer the question below and send it in to: PC Zone, Our Price Competition (58), Dennis Publishing Ltd, 19 Bolsover St, London W1P 7HJ.

Our Price Question:



WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE HERO IN *MONKEY ISLAND 3*?

Rules and restrictions: All entries must be received by Wednesday 17 December 1997. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision is final and the winners will be notified by post. All other usual restrictions apply.







DISCLAIMER: The Top 10 printed is correct at the time of going to press but positions, titles and prices may vary throughout the month.

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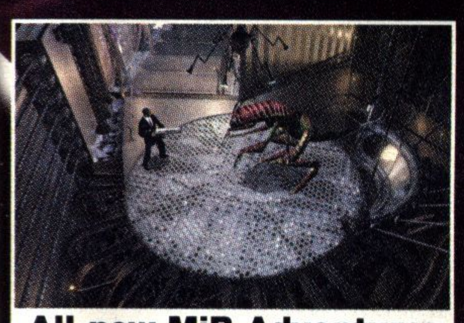
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PARENTAL ADVISORY EXPLICIT LYRICS

...Hare!

Paul Mallinson speaks to industry legend and Sensible Software supremo Jon Hare about sex, drugs, rock & roll, bananas and political correctness.

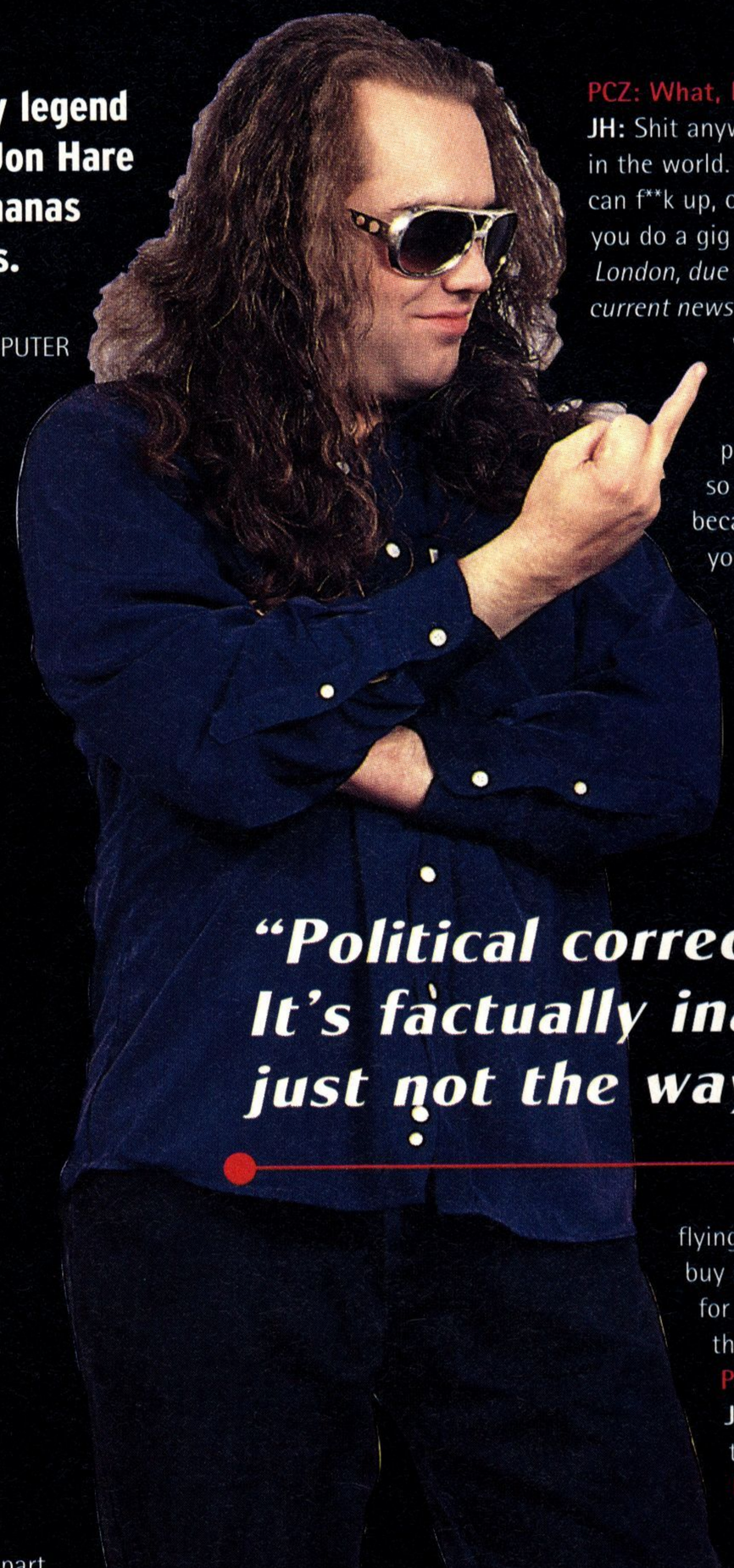
AT THE RECENT ELECTRONIC COMPUTER Trade Show (ECTS) a number of interesting industry people could be found propping up the bar at Harvey Floorbangers (the pub over the road from Olympia where the ECTS was being held) on the first night after the event. All the usual liggers were in evidence (ie us), plus a few old faces that we'd not seen in a while. Sensible Software supremo Jon Hare was there, pint of booze in hand, so *PC Zone* grabbed the chance to get him pissed and prise some gossip out of him. We knew he'd be good for a quote for two...

PC Zone: I want to start by dispelling a few rumours about Sex & drugs and Rock N Roll. (Sex & Drugs and Rock N Roll is Sensible Software's 'top secret' in-house project which has been the subject of much rumour and speculation over the past couple of years, and will be referred to as S&DRR from now on – Ed.) It's a game you've been working on for ages and nothing has ever been seen by the outside world. What sort of stage is it at? There's a lot of 'myth' surrounding the game at the moment.

Jon Hare: Myth? Yeah. Basically we've split the game into two parts now because it's massive. You're gonna have *S&DRR: The Early Years*, and *S&DRR: The Aftermath*.

PCZ: So, for the benefit of our readers, can you tell us what sort of game it's gonna be? Is it an adventure?

JH: Yeah – it's an adventure game. You play the part of Nigel Stanleyforth-Smythe. We picked the name 'Nigel' because it's not very appropriate. Nigel is the lead singer in a shitty garage, kind of punk band.



PCZ: What, like Half Man Half Biscuit?

JH: Shit anyway. The object is to become the biggest rock star in the world. The plot goes in all different directions and you can f**k up, or succeed, as you go along. Here's an example: you do a gig at Le Palais *(Legendary venue in Hammersmith, London, due to close and be converted into office space, if current news reports are to be believed – Ed.)*. It's a big gig with lots of A&R men milling around, and you get the chance to smoke a joint beforehand. If you *do* smoke the joint before the gig you puke up on stage in the middle of the number, so you don't get the record deal from the big agent because he thinks you're a tosser. On the flipside, if you don't smoke the joint, the agent comes along from the record company and offers you the deal. Then, someone beats you up because they think it should have been their deal, before injecting this massive needle of drugs into your head...

PCZ: Are you perpetuating the 'myth' here, or is this all true?

JH: Yeah it's true. When you come round you're being dragged through Heathrow because you're flying over to LA to sign this record contract. You buy some stuff from this Columbian guy who works for customs. You can fly the plane, crash it, and shag the stewardess in the toilets...

> ***"Political correctness is bullshit. It's factually inaccurate. It's just not the way things are."***

PCZ: Not necessarily all at the same time?

JH: No. You can get stoned and start to see things that aren't really there...

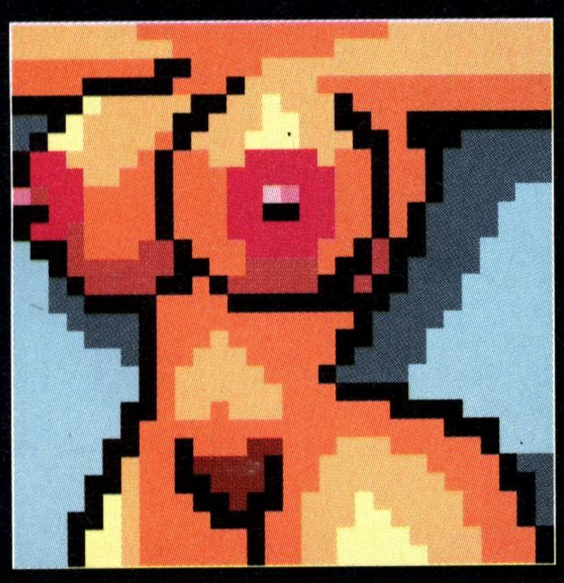
PCZ: Do you think you're going to come in for a lot of flak from the so-called 'moral majority' for something as un-PC as this?

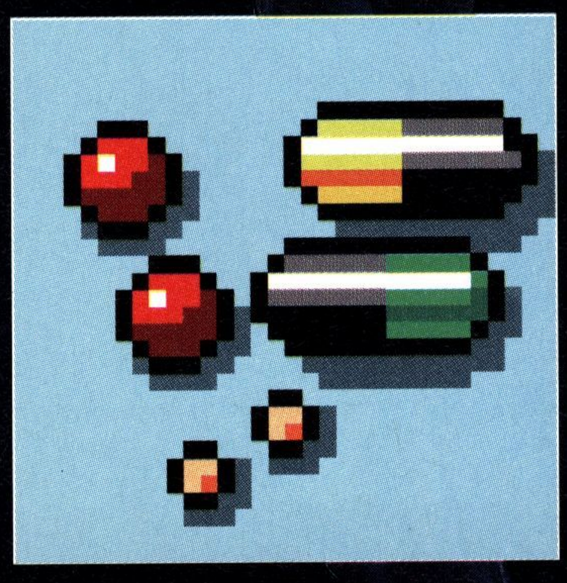
JH: I believe political correctness is bullshit. Political correctness isn't correct. Politically correct is factually inaccurate – it's not the way things are.

PCZ: So realism is everything in this instance then?

JH: We're heading for a 'this is the way it is, isn't it time we all woke up to it?' angle, because no matter what people think, people do do drugs, they do shag, and they do want to be rock stars.

The ingredients: sex, drugs and rock & roll. Easy really, given the game's title.







What's Your Game?

PCZ: Most people don't want to admit it. Except for maybe the shagging part.

JH: They don't want to admit it, but they do it. Loads of people do drugs. Because they don't really understand what it's all about they can get f**ked up. Then they think: 'I wish someone had told me about the dangers of taking drugs.'

I haven't done anything like that for years. It f**ks me up, so I don't do it anymore. There was a while when I'd smoke the odd joint, and it was good – I enjoyed it. But I don't wanna do it anymore because I'm too nervous a character to handle it. But I know people who aren't like me, who aren't nervous, that get on alright with it and go out and do a day's work the next day and not give a toss.

PCZ: So I take it, in the name of research, that's about half your team?

JH: *(Peals of laughter)* No comment!

PCZ: When are we actually going to see something of the game? We've seen nothing so far...

JH: The reason we're not showing anything yet is because the game's not going to be finished until late next year. Also, this is from Sensible Software's point of view. From GT Interactive's point of view, there may be some things in there that they don't want to be associated with, which may mean that we have to re-think certain elements of the script.

PCZ: Is it true there's an AIDS-related death in the game?

JH: There is, but that's in part two. You shag the wrong girl in part one, and in part two you die in hospital and the doctors take all your money.

PCZ: So what happens then – do you get a text message pop up with something like: 'Well done – you have scored 250 points' or something?

JH: *(Laughs)* Yeah probably – something like that.

PCZ: How are you going to do this? Rumours abound of a full motion video spectacular.

JH: None of it's video – it's all going to be created in a 'cartoon' style, with lashings of black humour. It should be funny, and if people don't understand it, or want FMV instead, then f**k them basically.

PCZ: Is there hard sex in it?

JH: There's hard cartoon sex in there, definitely. What sort of stuff are you talking about?

PCZ: You know – full-on penetration...

JH: There's a bit where this bloke shoves a banana up a girl's c**t. You don't actually see it going in – he gets the banana out, gives a knowing smile, and she goes 'oooh'. It's not what you show, it's how you show it. Our game does have a lot of thought behind it. Sure, there are some subversive elements, but they're nothing more than the sort of things you talk about when you're bullshitting with your mates down the pub. There's one scene in a sauna where you get a blow job from this girl. You might get to see a bit there – maybe between her legs *(laughs)*, like in *Basic Instinct*.

PCZ: So did you write the game Jon?

JH: Yes. It's something I've been working on for three years. I've put more into this than any other game I've been involved with – by a long way.

PCZ: How would you react if, after all this time and effort, your game was cut to ribbons by the censors?

JH: We've got to anticipate this because it's going to happen if we're not careful. We're not going to do anything illegal, and we can get away with more than we'd normally be allowed because the game is cartoony. It's not overly violent, the sex isn't too explicit as I mentioned before, and... well, it's funny. In one scene this girl pulls the lead character's knob out and it's floppy. We show that, but then she says "Oh forget about that then" and shoves it back in his pants. It's funny – not offensive.

PCZ: Are you confident that the final version will come through unscathed? Have you got complete creative control over the game?

JH: I have at the moment. It'll come through 'scathed', but we will have a 'proper' version which we'll be happy with. Visually, we're not taking a huge amount of risks because people will just want to cut it. As I'm still writing it we can tailor it as we go along. For example, there's a scene in a hotel room with a girl who will ask you what you want to do. You'll be able to choose from a list of: a) nothing, b) shag you up the arse, or c) shove something up your c**t – which will be exactly how the game puts it to you. But we haven't recorded anything yet, and changing a bit of script isn't as time-consuming as re-recording a voice-over or changing a big graphic. We're still gauging what's acceptable and what isn't while we're still at this early stage.

At the moment the view is: this is what people want. It *really is* what people want. I firmly believe that. There's nothing in the game that's immoral – but there are a few bits that are amoral.

PCZ: Is there anything in there your wife would object to?

JH: Maybe one or two things she wouldn't feel comfortable with. But having said that she wouldn't think we were bad – she'd know we were taking the piss. Stuff like paedophiles – you just don't cross those types of barriers – that's wrong.

PCZ: Right, I'm gonna change the subject. Tell me about this new 3D football game you're doing – Sensible Soccer 2000. Why did you go full 3D – commercial pressure?

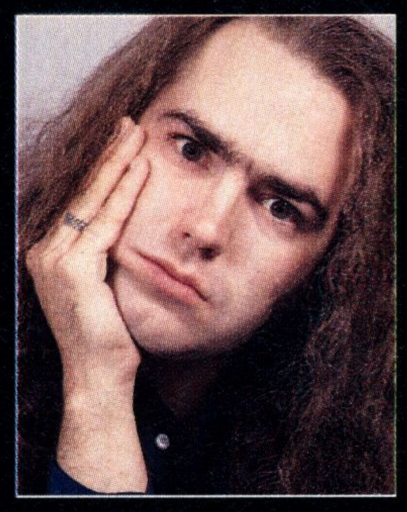
JH: I think we recognised that our graphics in the original were pushing it a bit, although at the moment the gameplay is dictating the graphics.

PCZ: The titchy Sensi players are renowned for their unfeasibly large 'mad eyes' – did you keep them in?

JH: They've got mean eyes at the moment *(laughs)*. At present it's not tuned to any level where it plays like *Sensi Soccer*. First we'll get it playing like *Sensi Soccer*, then afterwards bung the motion capture around it.

PCZ: Why call it Sensible Soccer 2000?

JH: *(Jokey cockney voice)* Well it's futuristic, ain't it? All these people with their '98 seasons can go f**k themselves! Z



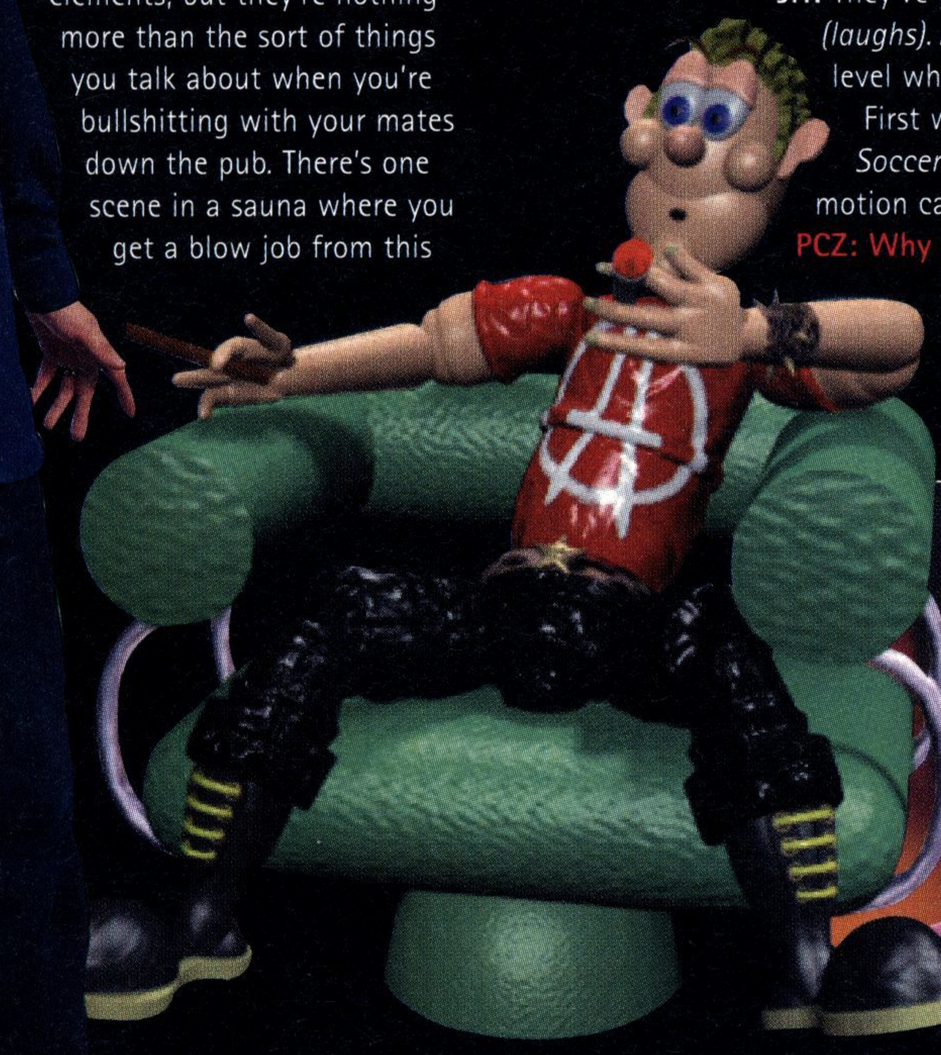




(Top) Jon Hare models the trademark 'mad eyes' as seen in the original *Sensible Soccer*.

PARENTAL ADVISORY EXPLICIT LYRICS







(Far left) Jon asks: "Are you ready for *Sex & Drugs and Rock N Roll*?" (Left) "It looks like a carrot and I invented it in Camberwell..." (Below) First ever in-game shot – Nigel spins a few tunes.

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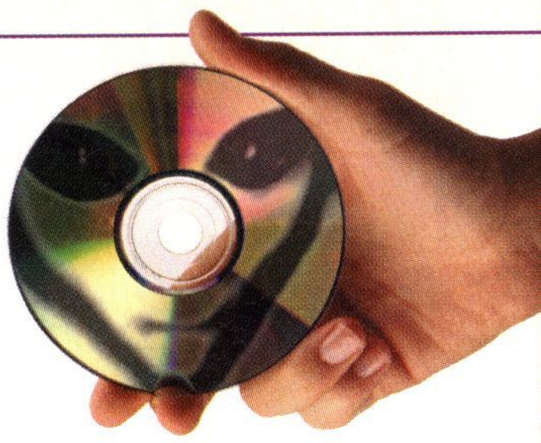
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First Encounter



Gabriel Knight 3:
Blood of the Sacred, Blood of the Damned

SIERRA'S CLASSIC ADVENTURE series is about to be given a 3D facelift. That'll be the perfect excuse to do away with all that FMV nonsense, says Chris Anderson.

TRADITIONAL POINT-AND-CLICK ADVENTURES are doomed. This is the general message being sent by software publishers the world over who claim today's gamers are absolutely obsessed with *Quake*-style shoot 'em ups. And they're not wrong. *Doom* and *Quake* have both given birth to a million clones, and we're bound to see hundreds more of the things way into next year. This would presumably explain then, why the latest game in the *Gabriel Knight* series will have an all-new 3D environment as opposed to the static backdrops of yore. In our opinion, this is good news for all. A 'real' adventure game with an open environment could conceivably create a cross-over genre which appeals to adventure fans and *Quake*-heads alike. This sort of thing has been tried before of course: *Under A Killing Moon* and *Pandora Directive* both took this approach, but the digitised characters and randomly placed objects in both games pale in comparison to *GK3*'s beautifully drawn characters and lush backgrounds. *Realms Of The Haunting* at least had impressive and truly interactive backgrounds but wasn't as strong as an adventure game. In this respect *GK3* could well offer the best of both worlds.

The story-line has always been the most important element in the *Gabriel Knight* mysteries, and *Gabriel Knight 3* looks set to continue where the previous two games left off. *GK3* takes Gabriel and his side-kick Grace to an ancient village in search of a Prince's kidnapped son. As the player progresses through the game, they discover a link between the village and the Prince's missing son. Cue much investigating by Gabriel, and much puzzle-solving by Grace.

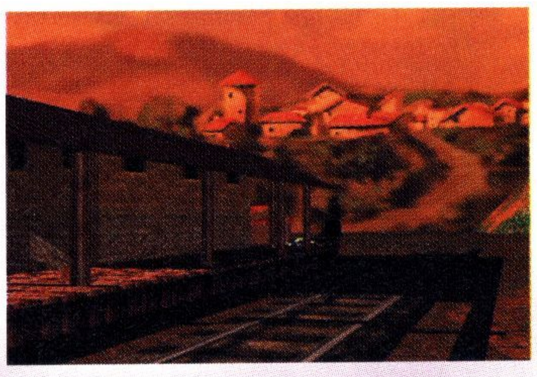
As was the case in *GK1* and *2*, the principal characters play an important part in creating the atmosphere. Jane Jensen (designer of the series) believes strong characters, such as Mario, can draw players into a game and give them a point of identity. A sense of purpose is also a key element, as Jane explains: "A feeling of mystery that draws the player in at the start of the game and continues throughout is essential. You have to give people a reason to want to go on, with lots of things to do that evoke responses, even if they're just voice-over responses. And then, ideally a satisfying story that not only makes the player want to continue, but gives them a sense of pleasure as they go along". Sounds good to us, though you'll have to wait until next summer to find out if Jane recaptures her past form to bring us a worthy addition to what's generally regarded as one of the best adventure series ever.

Unlike its predecessors, *Gabriel Knight 3* will feature open environments with greater scope for exploration.









The new episode sees a return to computer generated graphics as opposed to the FMV in *GB2*.



GB3 has more in common with the first *Gabriel* than the FMV sequel.



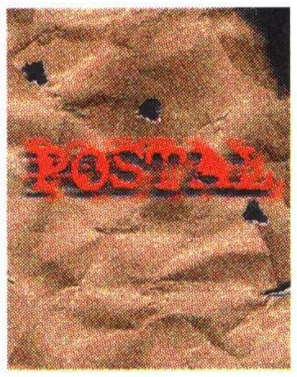
Product details

Title: Sierra
Developer: Sierra
Release Date: Summer 1998
Website: www.sierra.com

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BattleZone

JEREMY WELLS IS THE ONLY person in the office who still plays the original *BattleZone* – the first ever 3D game. Seventeen years later and he still has great difficulty trying to dodge those missiles.

REMAKES ARE ALL VERY WELL, BUT TOO often they fail to live up to the great expectations levelled at them by nostalgic gamers. Both *Robotron* X and *Atomic Bomberman* were ripe for a makeover, and although the developers made an effort to revamp the visuals, neither game managed to fully take the gameplay and add to it. Of course, there's a perfectly good argument for leaving the gameplay alone. After all, if it ain't broke... However, if that's the case, then why bother in the first place?

Andrew Goldman, product director for the new *BattleZone*, is the first to agree. "*BattleZone* was a great game, but short of simply making the graphics look more up to date, there was little we could do it. Consequently, we worked out what we like playing in the office and came up with a kind of *C&C/Quake* hybrid; then we looked at developing a game that took in some of the *BattleZone* elements."

A *C&C*-style game in a 3D environment might be realistic as far as controlling a battle goes, but the whole thing could easily turn out to be very confusing without a top-down view. Andrew nods and smiles. "We had exactly the same worries, but started working on a very simple interface that uses both the mouse and, in particular, the number keys in an effort to keep things very simple. Once you've played through just a couple of missions it's almost second nature. You assign different units to different keys, point where you want them to go and tap the spacebar. It's quick, easy and because you're actually within the environment, it's very realistic. You have to spend time on reconnaissance missions finding out where your enemy is located before you can steam in. It's true line of sight warfare and you have to use the terrain to your advantage. To help the player we've incorporated a great 3D radar system as well as spy cameras and stuff. It's cool."

Graphically, of course it's been revamped and thanks to a totally enhanced *Interstate 76* engine and over 30 different units you can hop into, it's more like playing *Magic Carpet* than *Armored Fist*. Although it's yet to be implemented, the developers are also promising four-way network play and head-to-head Internet play for full-on warfare. It's nothing like the old *BattleZone*, but then who would want it to be? Z

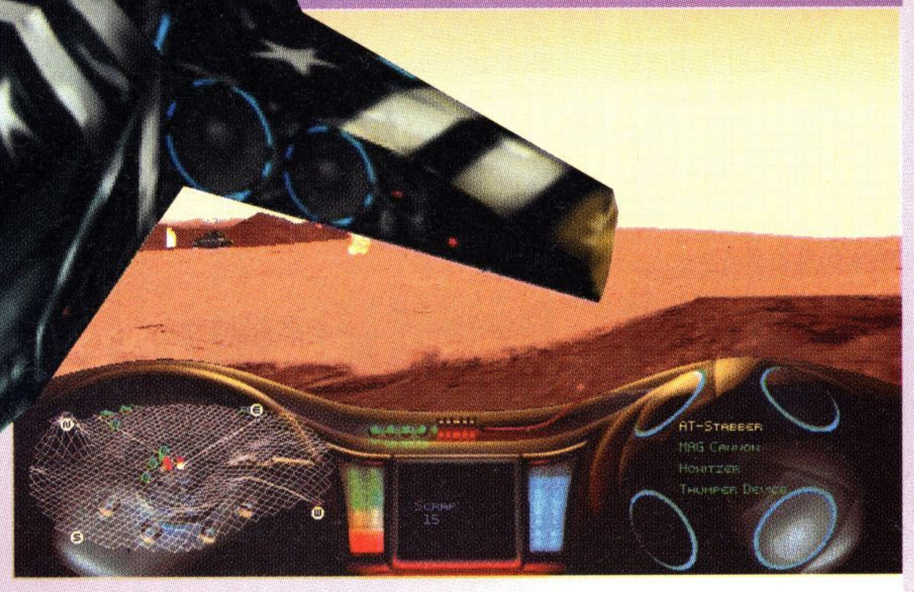


The game uses an enhanced *Interstate 76* engine and runs smoothly enough under software on a Pentium 166. A 3Dfx patch will follow release.

An easy to use, in-game terrain editor will also be included.

The player will be able to hop into 30 different vehicles and have over 25 weapons at their disposal.

The game is actually a prequel, set in the 1960s on eight planets in the solar system.

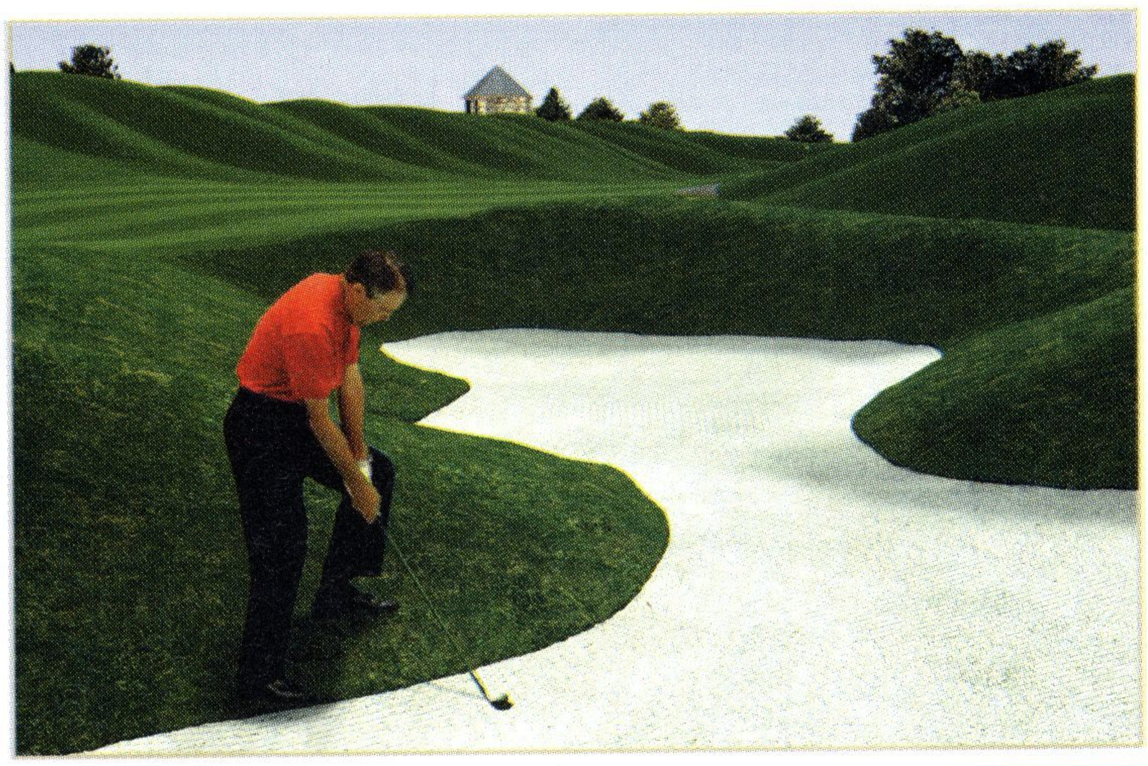


Product details

Developer: Activision
Publisher: Activision
Release Date: Feb 98
Website: www.activision.com

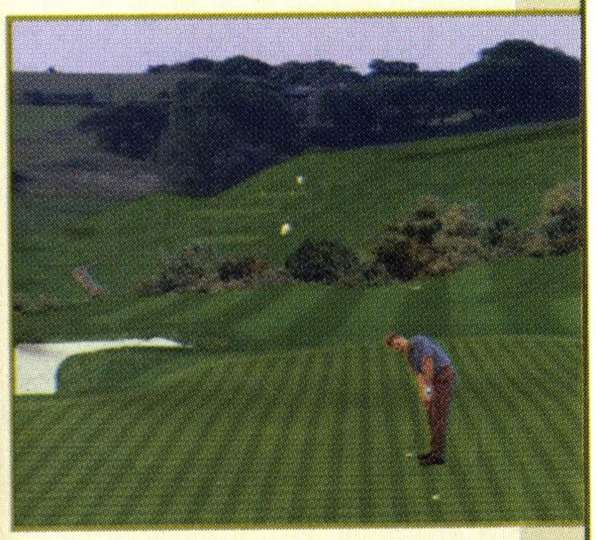


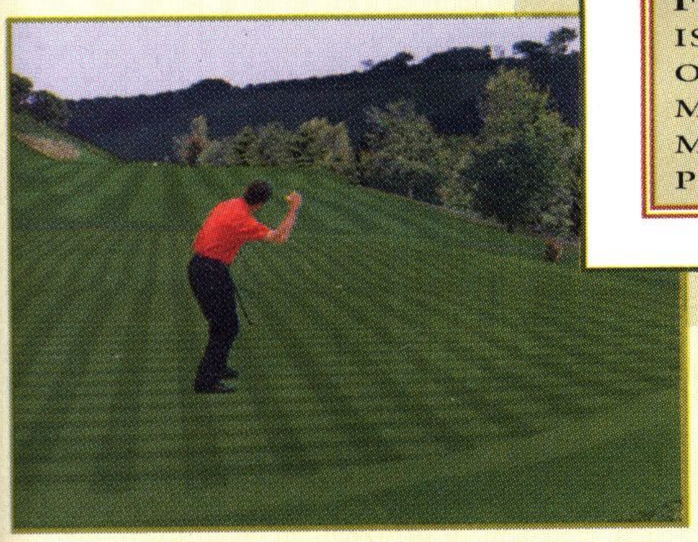
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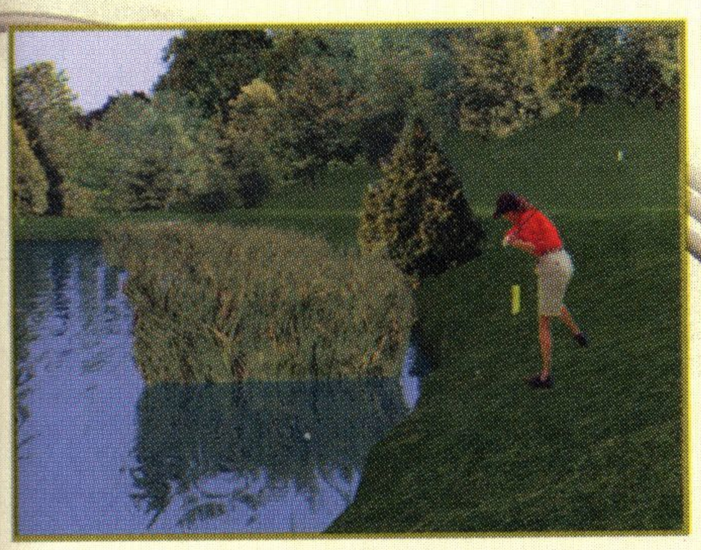
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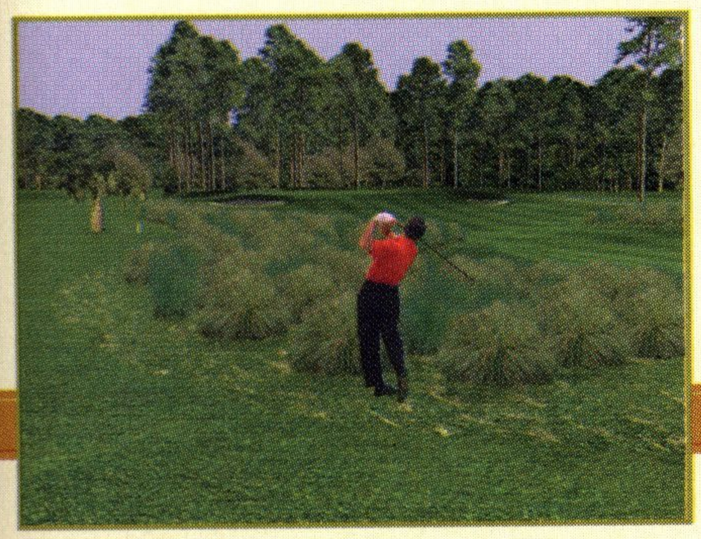




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Actual screen shots



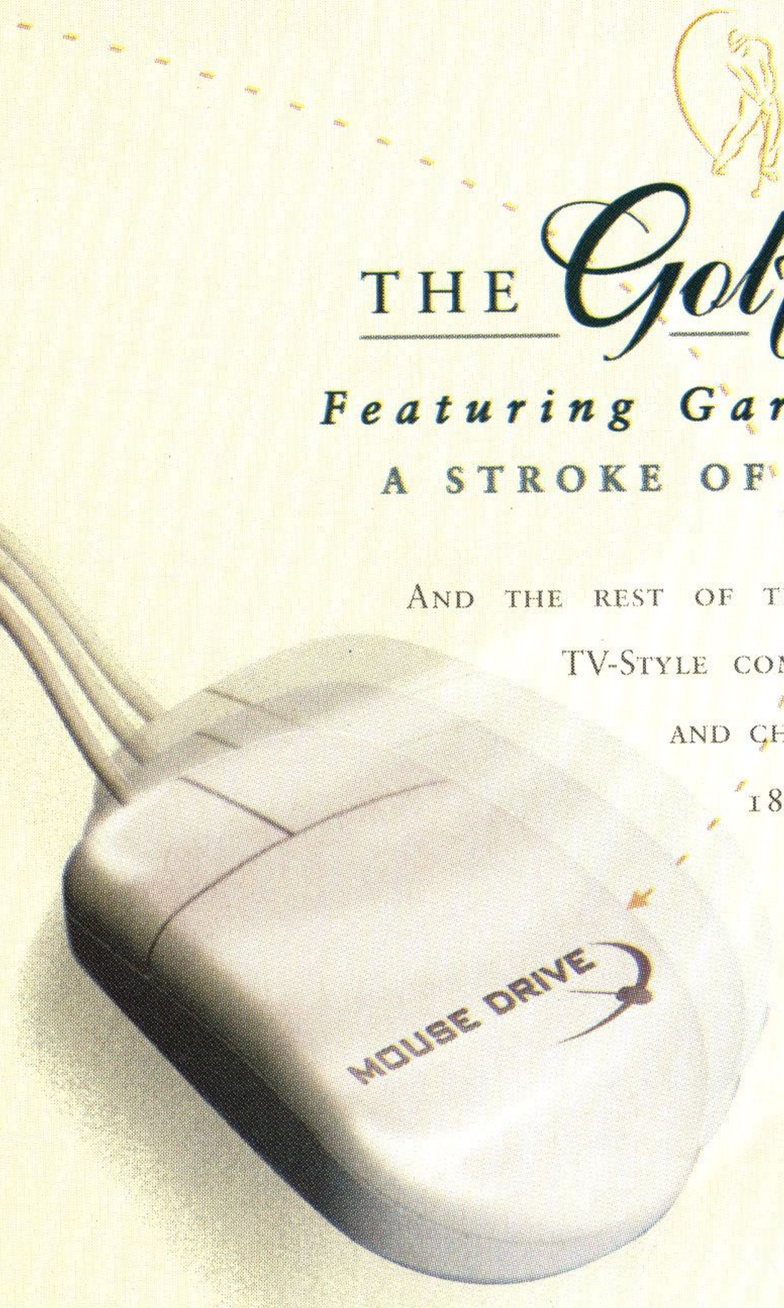


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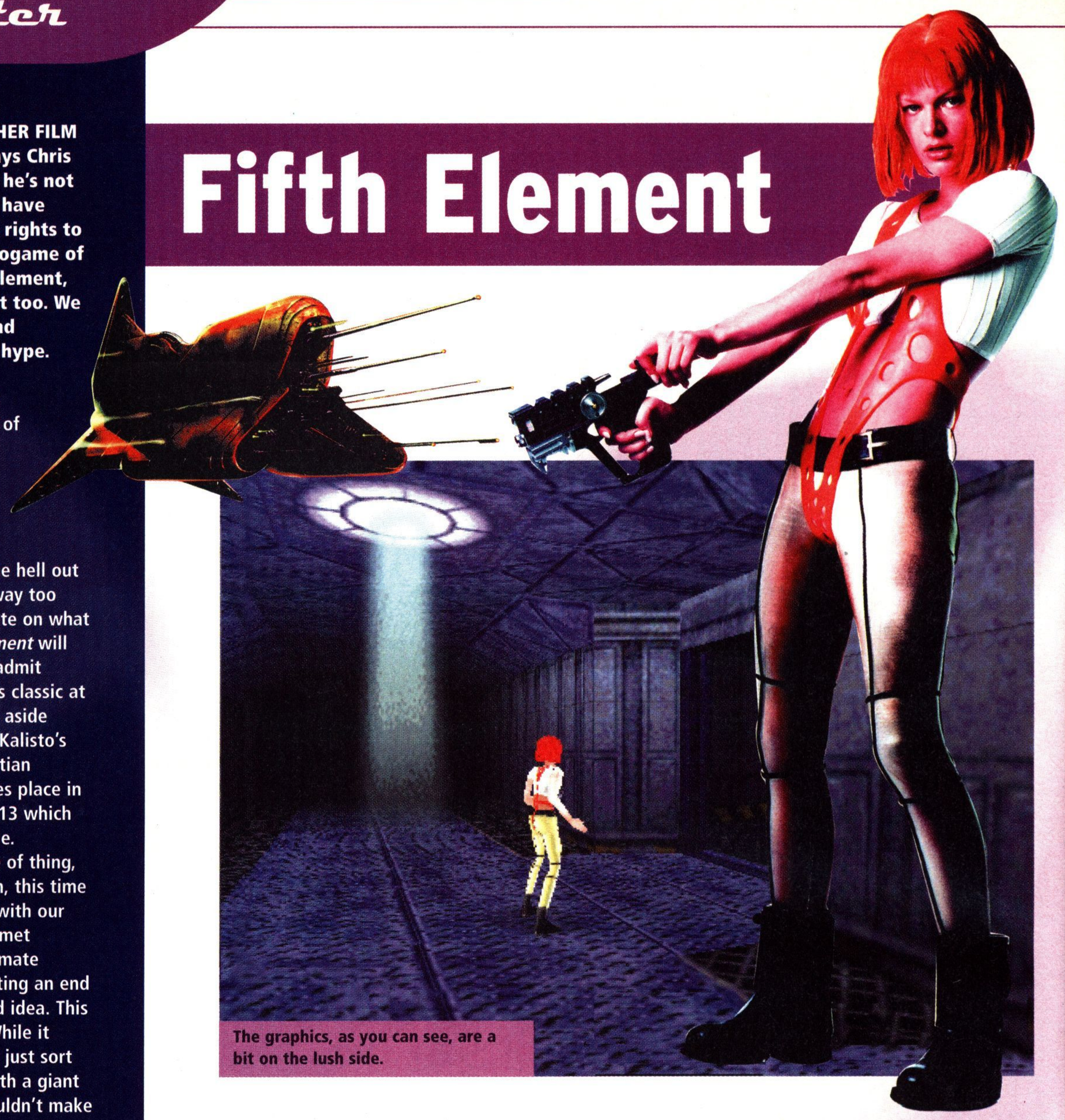
Fifth Element

THAT'LL BE ANOTHER FILM licence then, says Chris Anderson. And he's not wrong. Kalisto have snapped up the rights to produce the videogame of the hit movie Fifth Element, and they're well chuffed about it too. We take an early look at the title and search for gameplay amidst the hype.

HAVE A QUICK GLANCE AT THE screenshots on the other side of the page. Are you thinking what we're thinking? *Tomb Raider* perhaps? Well it certainly *looks* similar: girl roams around open environment brandishing dangerous weapons and blasting the hell out of everything. Okay, it's obviously way too early for us to irresponsibly speculate on what direction the gameplay in *Fifth Element* will take (*Quite: Ed*), but you've got to admit there's a definite similarity to Core's classic at this early stage. Gun-toting heroine aside however, the game environment in Kalisto's title is in stark contrast to the Egyptian landscapes in *TR. Fifth Element* takes place in the futuristic world of New York 2213 which provided the backdrop for the movie.

As is to be expected for this type of thing, the Earth is under threat once again, this time from a comet on a collision course with our lovely planet. This is no ordinary comet however: this one contains 'the ultimate distillation of evil', so naturally putting an end to the thing is deemed to be a good idea. This is easier said than done however. While it would obviously make life easier to just sort of swat the thing out of the way with a giant baseball bat or something, that wouldn't make for particularly interesting gameplay and the game would be over far too quickly. To this end, the player will need to recover four ancient stones representing the elements of earth, fire, wind and water. Once the stones have been gathered, they must be returned to their correct alignments before the final saviour can arrive on the scene in the shape of an alien girl called Leeloo. Players will control both Korben Dallas (a cab driver apparently) or Leeloo (pictured right) at different points in the game depending on which one is most appropriate for the task at hand, thus er, making our earlier *Tomb Raider* comparison look a bit premature (*Told you so: Ed*).

Fifth Element will use an advanced version of the 3D engine Kalisto used for *Nightmare Creatures* on Playstation (a scrolling beat 'em up apparently), and the film licence will be fully exploited with many of the 'visually incredible' locations from the movie appearing in the game for the player to explore and interact with. Recognisable enemies from the movie will also make an appearance, such as Mangalores, flying Robocops and evil henchmen (*Coo: a reader*). Cut-scenes from the movie will appear in the game too, along with ideas that never made it into the final film. If *Fifth Element* lives up to expectations we could all be in for a bit of a treat. If it doesn't, we probably won't be. Either way, don't expect it to look anything like *Tomb Raider 2* (cough).



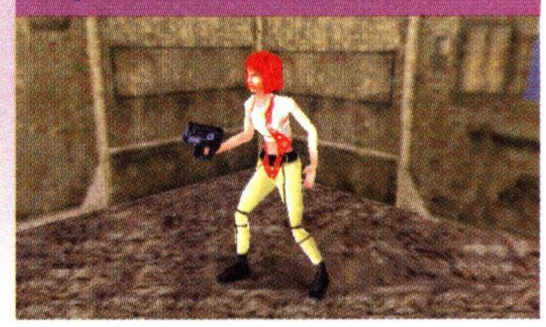
The graphics, as you can see, are a bit on the lush side.







Lara Croft, is it? I'll take her on any day of the week.



Product details

Title: Fith Element
Developer: Kalisto
Publisher: Rage Software
Spec: P133, 16Mb RAM, 3Dfx
Release Date: Feb 98

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Star Trek: The Next Generation - Klingon Honour Guard

MICROPROSE ARE WORKING on three new *ST:TNG* games, including one that allows you to walk around stabbing people with a Cornish pastie on your head. Jeremy Wells has always had a soft spot for anything in short crust pastry.

THERE'S LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE *STAR TREK: The Next Generation* licence is very lucrative and MicroProse are obviously very keen to hold on to it. The thing is, licences can be as limiting as they are fruitful. In the case of *ST:TNG*, not only do the cast get final approval on how their characters look on-screen, but everything has to be passed under the hyper-critical eye of Paramount to ensure that the licence isn't harmed or damaged in anyway. In other words, the crew can't act out of character in any way, so they'll never be involved in merciless killing or deathmatch shenanigans – they'll kill the Borg, but only when it's necessary. And that's part of the reason why *Klingon Honour Guard* is being developed. People want to run amok in the *Star Trek* universe blasting everything in sight – they want *Star Trek Quake*, and that just wouldn't wash with Paramount. As a result, the developers have decided to use the UNREAL engine to create a game set within the *Star Trek* universe, but features none of the characters from the series. Yep, they've gone Klingon.

The action begins with the player engaged in advanced training supervised by Kurn, son of Mogh, brother of Worf. The final training mission is halted when assassins attack the high council and the player receives their first 'real' mission: to battle their way to the final level and find out who is responsible for the assassination attempt. In other words it's a full-on blast and hack fest (the player is able to blast their opponents with disruptor fire or fell them with vicious hat'leth strikes).

A quick play around one of the early levels was enough to confirm that *Klingon* should more than satisfy most Trekkies, with 15 expansive levels including space stations, starships and alien cities and nine weapons, five of which have been created especially for the game and according to MicroProse's Derek Leish "The look, sounds and weapons of the Klingon Empire will be recreated to exacting detail." There'll also be two modes of play: a plot-driven campaign and multi-player deathmatch mode which will support modem, LAN and Internet play. The polygon characters look crisp and well animated compared to the voxel-based characters that are being used in MicroProse's other *Star Trek*: TNG game, *First Contact*, and the environment looks as good as any other game that uses the UNREAL engine.

The release date is far off and the game is still going through the play-test mill while the programmers chew on new ideas. According to playtester Ken Schmidt they're hoping to achieve something on a par with the awesome *GoldenEye* on the Nintendo 64: "We need to distinguish ourselves from all the other first person shoot 'em ups out there. It's gotta have replay value, especially in single-player mode. If we can keep people playing it once they've completed, we'll know it's a good game."



Just like *First Contact, Klingon - Honour Guard* uses the UNREAL engine.

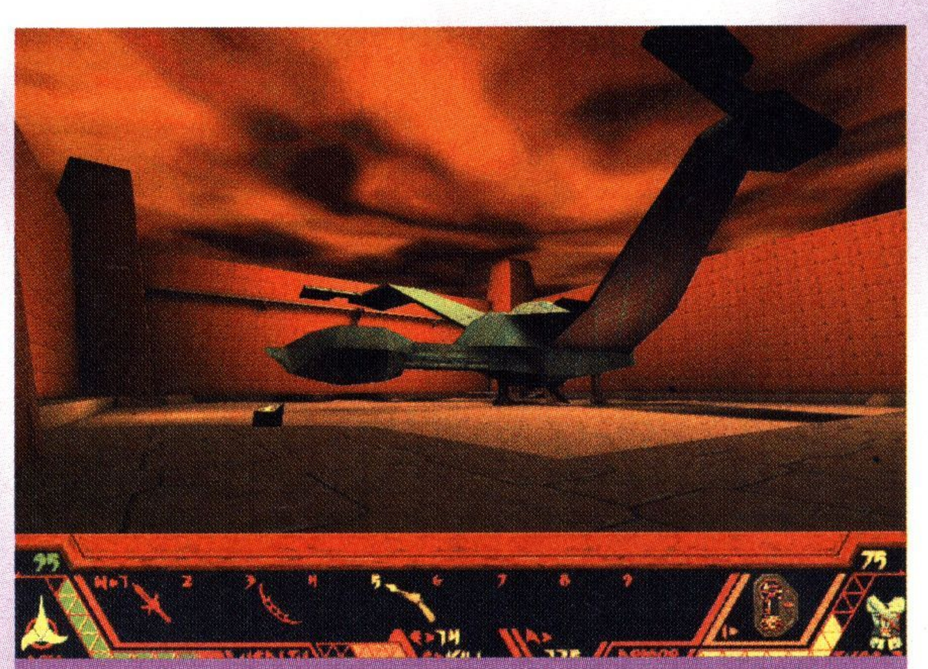




The game will sport fifteen different levels ranging from space stations and starships to alien cities. The level of detail is already amazing as can be seen from the shots on this page.



Exterior as well as interior levels will be featured as in *Generations*, to give a sense of scale akin to LucasArts' *Jedi Knight*.



Unlike *Star Trek: TNG - First Contact, Honour Guard* will sport polygon characters and objects instead of sprites.

Product details

Developer: MicroProse
Publisher: MicroProse
Release Date: April '98
Website: www.microprose.com

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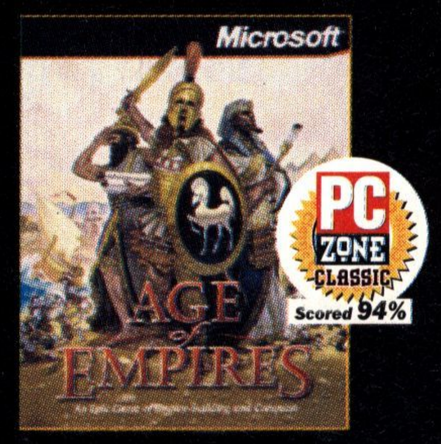


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QUAKE II







(Above) A new foreboding three dimensional texture has replaced the churning vomit sky of yore. (Top right) *Quake II*'s sense of scale somewhat enhanced over *Quake*'s. (Bottom right) Alternate field-of-views now work in GL mode.

Quake II is out. Well, a demo of it. Er, actually just a three-level 'alpha' early version. But hey – you can break one egg to make an omelette, right? Don't worry – David McCandless will explain everything...

IT FIRST APPEARED ON ID SOFTWARE'S FTP site at about 3.30am on Sunday 19 October. By the break of day, over 200,000 people were desperately leeching off the iD Website in a vain attempt to download the 11MB zip-file. Eight hours later, it had been copied to practically every game site and public archive in the world. People were beginning to digest their first look at Quake II, the sequel to the follow-up of the most revolutionary game ever made; Doom.

iD have released a three-level test, much like they did with the original *Quake*. This time however, it's not a network test, but more of a basic beta-test. It has a healthy selection of monsters, weapons, three nearly complete levels and loads of glorious little effects which ice the cake nicely. In short, it's a marvel. A spectacle. A masque. An extravaganza. A teaser of what's to come. A mono-sodium glutamate to get your games playing glands salivating.

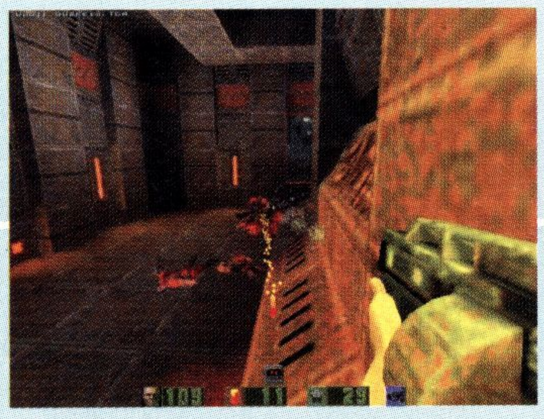
Not all enemies are born equal

You start in a beaten up communications centre. There are a few dead bodies splattered around. Holes in the walls. Sparks fly from dangling cables. Your first weapon is a piss-poor pea-shooter, poking out from the side of the screen. It fires a slow moving fairy light which leaves a trail of pixie dust behind it. A throbbing manstick of rocket launcher it most certainly ain't.

A further scurry around the start area reveals lots of breakable glass, ladders (look up and press forward to climb them), and some itsy-bitsy crawl spaces, ideal for utilising the new crouch feature. Then, suddenly, the moment arrives; your first encounter with a bad-guy.

It's a grunt, with a big gladiatorial head and a puny body. Pah, you say, levelling your pea-shooter and letting rip some 'magic dust'. The grunt effortlessly ducks your slow-moving projectile and lets rip a couple of his own. Ow! Ow! Dead.







Product details

Developer: iD Software

Publisher: Activision

Website: www.idsoftware.com

Release Date: Christmas

(Above) As you can see, coloured lighting makes a slight bit of difference to the visuals of *Quake II*. The phrase 'dynamically iridescent hyper-kinetic blast 'em up' springs to mind (*And rolls succinctly off the tongue – Ed*).

Ah the ignominy. Being slaughtered by the weakest foe in the game within the first forty-five seconds. On the next visit, you take an alternate route, leaping down a hole and into a sewer area, where coloured lights, dripping water and a very low ceiling add a sense of menace to every footstep. You're now beginning to recapture the feeling you had

"Quake II *has a distinct and unique feel, far away from the relentless knife-through-butter of the original.*"

when you first played *Doom*. Everything was new and scary. You didn't know what to expect...

Later, in a warehouse area bathed in orange and red light, you have another hair-raising encounter. Several large ogre-like cyborgs emerge from behind boxes. There's one on the rafter above you and another coming down the stairs. They're all sporting gatling guns and they're all deadly accurate. In any other game, you'd simply stay on the move and smack them one by one. It's not so easy here. They track you effortlessly, duck your shots, and take seven or eight shots to dispatch completely. Luckily though, hiding behind one of the crates is a single barrelled shotgun. It creates a healthy spray of blood, but beware, the reload times are achingly long. You take a shot, dance around like Zorro, and then let off another. Better still, you find some cover, crouch behind a box, and then dart up intermittently and lay down some suppressing fire. Either way, the fire fight lasts a good two minutes and by the time it's finished, you're sweating. In real life.

There. A little reportage from the frontier of *Quake II*. For the next paragraph I am going to make a very rare foray into the first person because my opinion differs rather radically from others in the *PC Zone* office...

I think *Quake II*, thus far, is great. I think visually, sonically, and atmospherically, it's great. It's glossy, very well





The levels gradually develop from boxy surface structures (Top) to scary, restrictive, all-consuming underground claustrophobia (Bottom).

The world-wide reaction

It may be because of the incredible nit-picky nature of the Internet. Or maybe just the incredibly nit-picky nature of people given a voice on the Internet. Who knows? Who cares? Suffice to say, reactions on the intergalactic bulletin-board were at best predictable, at worst downright anal. We trawled through Usenet group rec.computer.games.quake.misc to find the cream of the spooging. Remember *Quake* was slagged off ad infinitum when it first appeared, by the same people who now own a personal ISDN and ensure that even their mothers refer to them as Lord UberFrag Of *Quake*World.

"Well, I downloaded the "demo/test" of *Quake II*. I must admit, I'm somewhat disappointed. Visually, *Quake I* had some palette problems (namely it was all greenish) and unfortunately *Quake II* seems to be continuing the tradition with a switch from all green to all grey. Most annoying was the over-use of coloured lighting. In every corner, from every rocket blast, vibrant flashes of colour burst forth..."

"That is funny. You argue that it is too grey then argue it has too many colours in the same paragraph!"

"Based on what I've seen so far, I give *Quake II* only two stars."

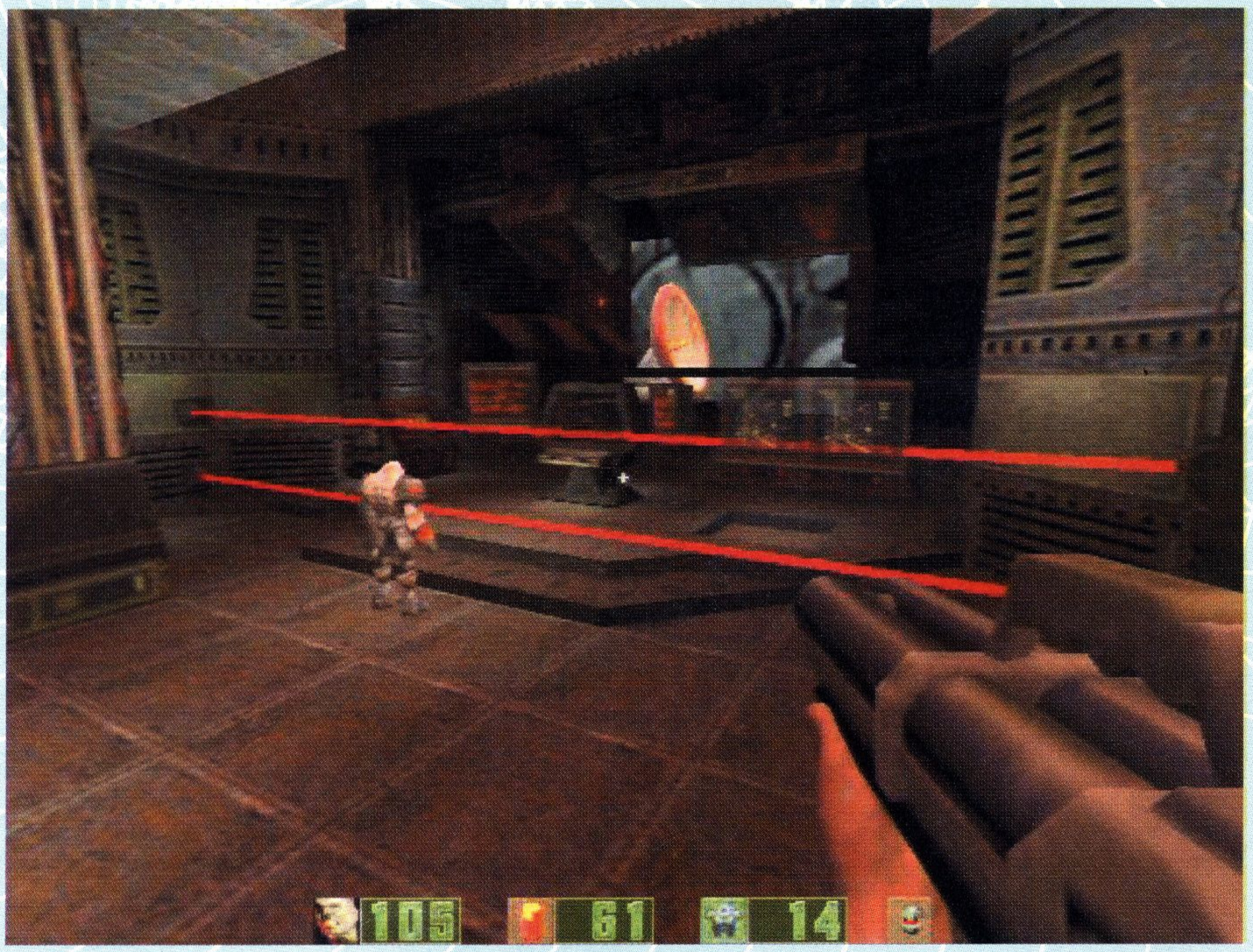
"I was playing *Q2*TEST yesterday, and couldn't help but draw comparisons with *Doom*. I must explain that up until now NO game has excited me like *Doom* did (and I'm thinking about episode one of *Doom I* here). *Duke3D, Quake, Dark Forces, Hexen*... naahh. It was episode one of *Doom* that did it for me. The overall feel of the *Quake II* I have experienced now seems very familiar."

"Haven't seen the flying creatures yet, but the parasite is amazing. The first time I saw one, it killed me. As I lay dead, I watched it scratch behind it's ears. The believability of the animation was incredible."

"I was mightily impressed by the enemies' evasive AI. I don't know if I'm imagining things or it was just a pain frame, but it seemed to me that, besides dodging and ducking, they also jump over your shots."

"I still feel that it is closer to *Duke3D* than *Quake*. Even the sounds seem like they've come straight from *Duke*. *Quake* was dark and earthy. *Quake II* seems a little too glitzy and sterile."

"Good points: the overall setting, similar to *Doom*, the areas are larger and there is a lot more to explore; more substance to the single-player game – there are goals that need to be accomplished; the enemies have better AI than *Quake*."







(Top) The final objective in non-3D accelerated mode. (Above) The much maligned bitmapped explosions. (Right) Aqua-marine lighting innit?

artworked, and still retains some of the characteristic iD house-styles (dark, grimy, scary, bloody etc). More than all that though, *Quake II* has a distinct and unique feel, far away from the relentless knife-through-butter of the original *Quake*, miles away from the speedy run-fight-run rhythm of *Doom*, and beyond the start-stop too much going on *Duke Nukem* approach. There's an actual feel that you really are out-gunned, out-manoeuvred, and out-thought as you mince around the levels. In *Quake* you just have to grab the rocket launcher and you're Superman – the world is your oyster. In *Q2*, you have to furtively use every last bullet, every grenade, and every health kit. You're going to have to crouch through every crawl space, check every corner, use the barrels and boxes for cover, and basically stay on your toes all the time, as a relentless stream of well-placed, aggressive, and clever monsters hunt you down.

What do you mean, a re-count?

Managing your resources, aiming well and creeping around will make the difference between finishing the level and getting your arse smeared against a wall like peanut butter over a Digestive biscuit.

The only doubts surfacing currently seem to be about iD's thinking behind the *Q2*TEST launch. Popular belief contends that you shouldn't let the public make decisions for you. You should always be your own barometer. Already iD have conceded that they will change certain animations, a few spot effects and the bit-mapped explosions because of a few comments made about *Q2* by Internet folk. This is a dangerous precedent. How do you decide what stays or goes, if 50 per cent of the world like crouching and 50 per cent don't? What if there's another round of wholesale slagging when the proper demo materialises? What do you do? Push the release back further and further? Release weekly beta-versions until you please all of the people all of the time?

iD contend that this is a bug-test, the perfect way of testing their codebase on a couple of hundred thousand PC's around the world. Mmmm. It would appear that it has already evolved beyond that. Think of it more of a trailer or a message in a bottle to everyone who might be doubting or distracted or producing their own *Quake* spawn that *Quake II* is and will be "rocking".

You can download the *Quake II* test demo from www.idsoftware.com.



(Above) Transparent water in software – one of the 'big things' that feature in *Quake II*. Not exactly the local swimming pool.

No flies on us!!!!!!!

Bizarrely enough, when faced with a three-level demo of easily one of the most eagerly-anticipated games of all time, most of the bandwidth is taken up with a mindless sprawling argument about the flies which collect around dead bodies in the game.

"The flies are a novelty at first but they then become irritating."

"They do get kind of annoying so I stop and pull out the laser gun (or what ever it's called) and gib the bodies that have flies."

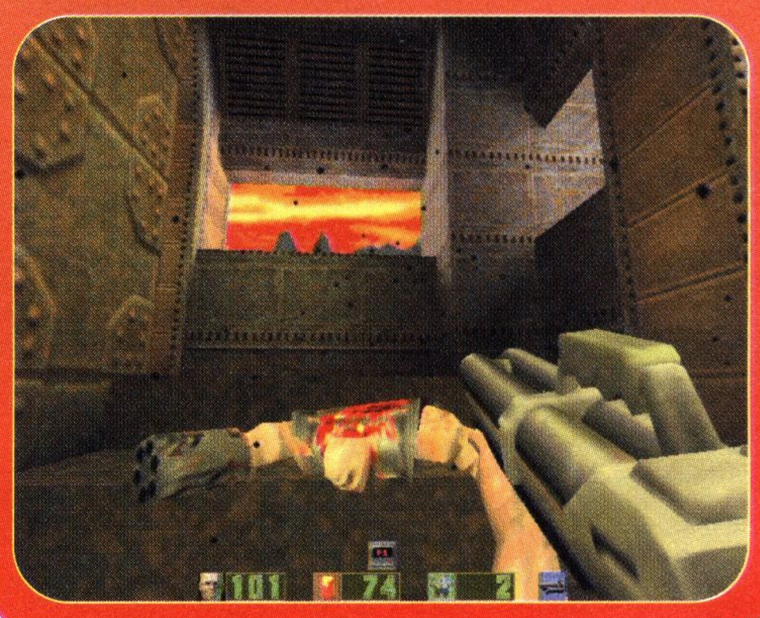
"Yeah, I find them somewhat irritating at times, but I think they add an overall 'angst' and do accomplish a primal tug on some emotional cord."

"I don't so much mind the flies, but the short time in which they appear. Flies are attracted to rotting corpses not to bodies that have just fallen over. When you kill the tanks, the flies immediately swarm the body."

"The flies are a bit weird, but I can live with them. Question is: why do so many appear instantly?"

"Hey – maybe make the flies bite, so that after a certain number of clouds you could start taking minor damage until you move a bit. This would then make dead bodies disintegrate on their own, since the cloud of flies would destroy the corpses after a time."

"iD threw the flies in to discourage campers. I haven't played the demo yet, but the longer you stay in one spot the worse the fly situation is supposed to get."

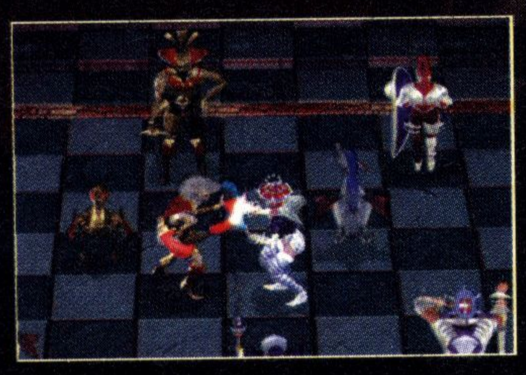


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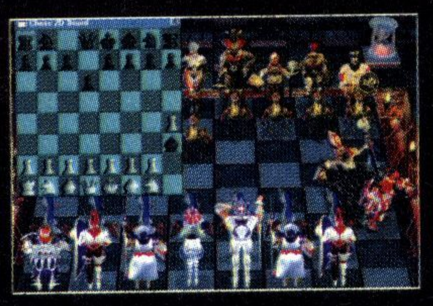
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PRO PILOT





Flying planes in real life takes years of practice and hard work – concepts totally alien to Dave Mathieson. Fortunately, the chance to make a few quid on the side persuaded him to write about flying pretend planes instead.

What everyone wants is to see their house featured, which means they can buzz their neighbours all night long

ASK PC OWNERS WHAT THEY THINK OF flight sims, and you'll discover that most think they're pretty snoozeville. There is a significant minority however, for whom flight sims are the only reason for owning a PC, and this has been the case since the first PCs were invented. What's more, flight sims are arguably responsible for making PCs the excellent games platforms they are now. All those lovely 3D graphics were first developed to make the view from the cockpit of a Cessna flying over New York look prettier, and have since been adapted for other games that use a first person perspective.

The granddaddy of all flight sims, Microsoft's *Flight Simulator*, has always differed from the rest of the genre in that it features only civilian planes. While this has meant a distinct lack of hi-tech weaponry, Microsoft has compensated for this by making the experience as realistic as possible – with accurate cockpits and flight characteristics, and loads of locations to choose from. With the exception of *Flight Unlimited*, which concentrates more on nippy little aerobatic planes, there haven't been any recent sims that can compete with MS *Flight Sim* in this area. Except *Pro Pilot*, maybe.

Lots of planes

Pro Pilot has been developed by Sierra, and it's designed to out-do Microsoft's baby in the realism stakes. Better-known for their top historical war sims, *Red Baron* and *Aces Over The Pacific* and *Aces Over Europe*, Sierra have turned their hand to creating the definitive flying experience on your PC. *Pro Pilot* puts you at the controls of one of five different planes, the Cessna 172, Cessna Citation Jet, Beach Baron B58, Bonanza V35 or the King Air B200. This choice of jets, light prop planes and sailplanes means that you've got plenty of ways of exploring the in-game scenery.

The scenery in *Pro Pilot* is most impressive. One of the biggest criticisms of *Flight Sim '98* is that everything's pretty flat. Sierra's clever 3Space technology means that the world of *Pro Pilot* contains 27 million elevation points across North America, which translates into many mountains and other bumps. Of course, hills are one thing, but *Pro Pilot* covers everything in lovely texture maps as well.

What everyone wants, though, is to see their house featured, which means that they can buzz their hated neighbours all night long. *Pro Pilot* can't promise this, but there are 29 photo-realistic cities, so if you live in one of these you can at least fly over the general area. There are



Pro Pilot's **got 27 million elevation points in it - that means lots of lovely mountains like this.**





(Top) More nice scenery, this time gently rolling hills and fields



There are plenty of video tutorials to help you out with tricky tasks – like turning.

Product details

Developer: Dynamix

Publisher: Sierra

Website: www.sierra.com

Release Date: 12th December

also more than 3,000 airports and 60,000 'obstacles' or buildings and pylons and other 'things' to crash into when you get tired of being Mr.Sensible. If the North American bias sounds a bit off-putting, don't worry, as Sierra plan add-on scenery disks, with Europe at the top of their list.

Part of the 'fun' of flying is trying to land in the pissing rain with visibility down to about two feet. *Pro Pilot*'s got the full range of weather, from bright Californian sunshine to scary Canadian blizzards. Unlike the competition, which usually turn all adverse weather into varying amounts of fog, *Pro Pilot* has actual snowflakes and raindrops, so if your windscreen wipers pack up at 5,000 feet, you're knackered.

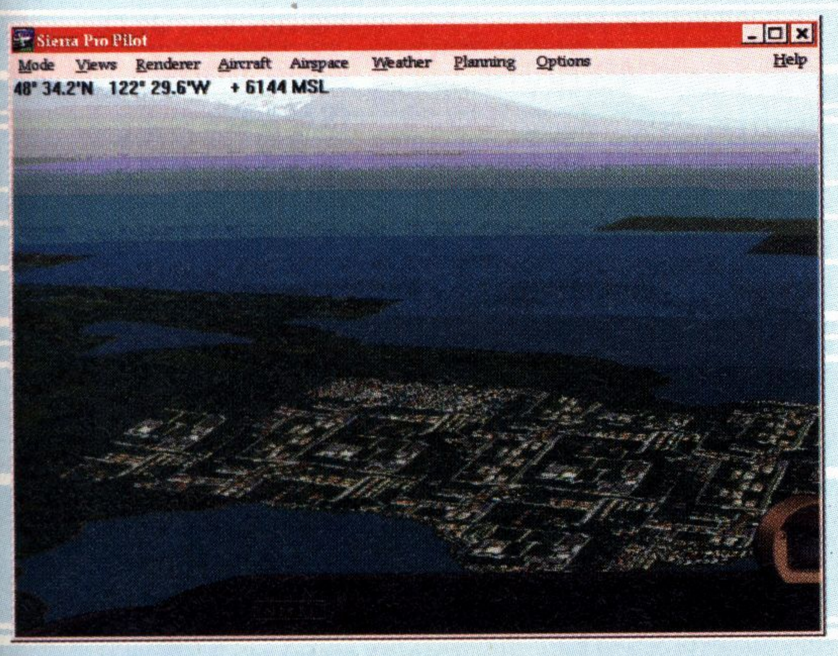
Unless you're deaf, visuals are only one part of the realism equation, as Sierra's sim has plenty of chat from the control tower, your co-pilot and other planes in the area. There's also the usual engine noises and tyre squeaks on touchdown.

Ninja-PC alert

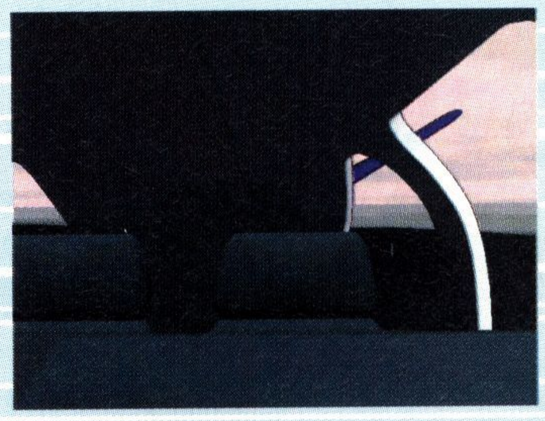
As you'd expect, though, all this realism comes at the price of needing a pretty speedy PC to get things going at a decent frame rate. The pre-release copy we looked at was just about playable on a P166MMX, but you'll get much better results with something a lot faster. The final version should be considerably optimised though, putting it in reach of more average PCs. There are plenty of detail settings that can be turned down, too. One disappointment is the lack of support for 3D cards. While most people still don't have decent cards, the difference they can make is enormous, as anyone who's seen the accelerated versions of games like *EF2000, Flying Corps* and *FS98* will testify. A hundred quid's worth of 3Dfx card is still the best upgrade that can be made to the average PC, often at least doubling the frame rate as well as improving image quality.

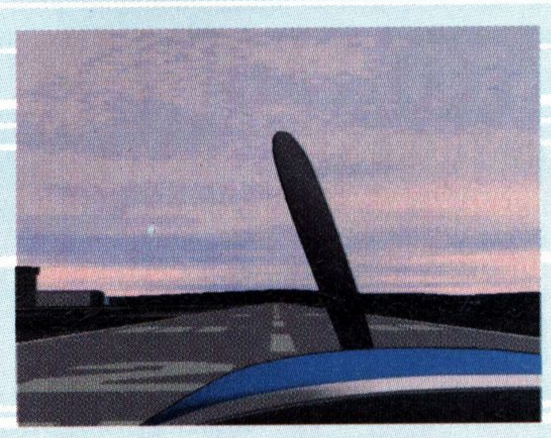
This whingeing aside, the gameplay looks to be first-rate, and realism has been taken to another level. The cockpits are incredibly detailed and every switch and dial is completely functional. I sat on the runway trying to get the engine started for ages, stalling it every time until I realised that you have to activate the fuel tank switch. Obvious really, but not modelled on other sims, so full marks to Sierra. The range of scenery and weather options are stunning too, and there's a very handy on-line map that contains the radio frequencies for the different navigation beacons spread across the whole North American continent. A note to military sim pilots – civil planes don't have nice pre-set way points that a trained monkey could follow. You've got to plan your route, tune your radios and lots of other hard stuff if you don't want to end up over the Rockies with an empty fuel tank.

While not as big in scope as *FS98*, the areas that *Pro Pilot* cover are more detailed. As I've never flown a real plane, I can't say which game has got the most realistic flight model, but the greater detail in *Pro Pilot* might make it more attractive to the hardened propeller head. Whether this makes it a better game depends on what you're looking for, and the lack of 3D card support might put off the less-than-ninja PC owner. Still, entry-level PCs are all at least P200s these days, and if any game's worth upgrading for, *Pro Pilot* looks like it could be it. Z



The prospect of gliding in over the local town and scaring the wits out of Mrs Miggins at No.44 looks all the more likely with the range of cities and towns on offer.





(Above) After flying around that gentle scenery all day, it's nice to be back home. I hope it rains tomorrow.

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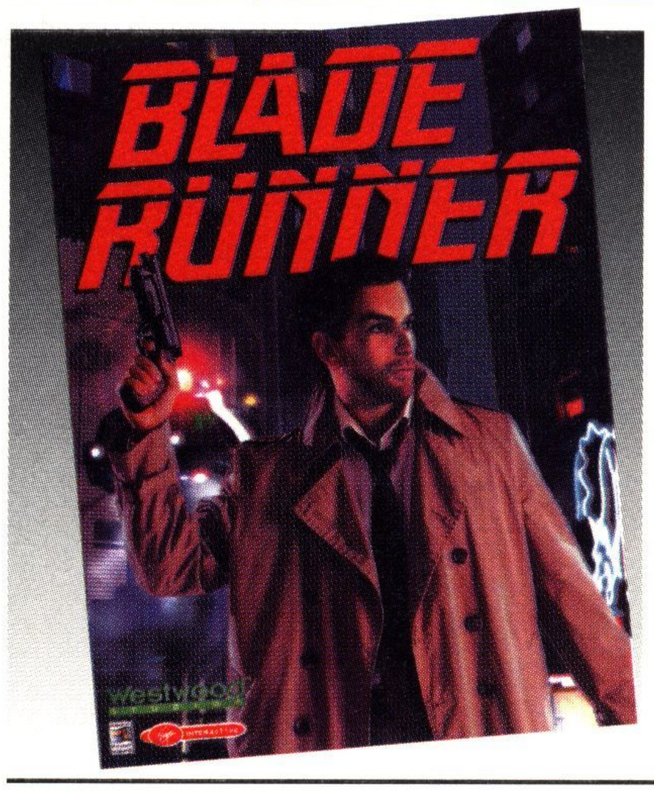
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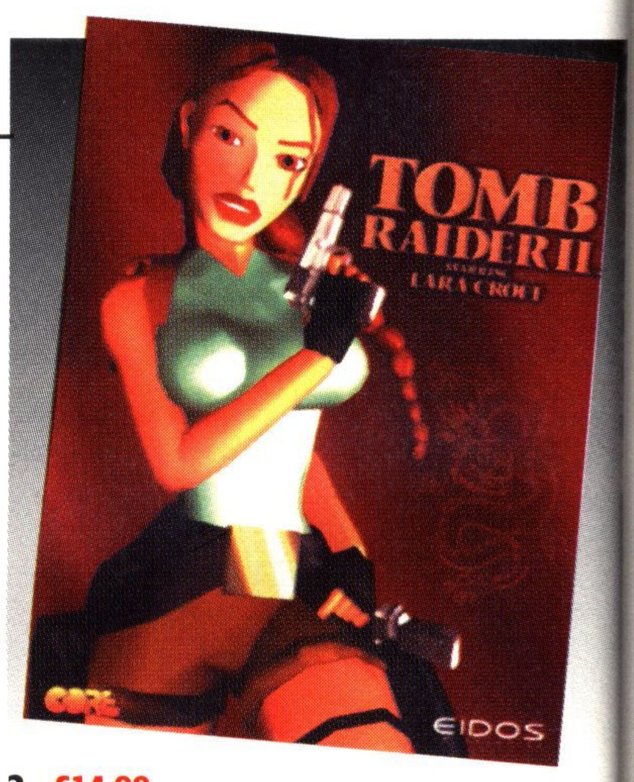
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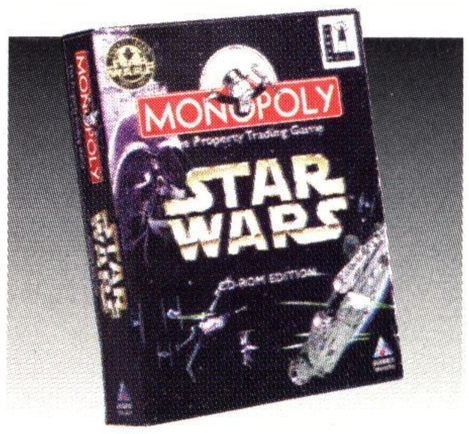
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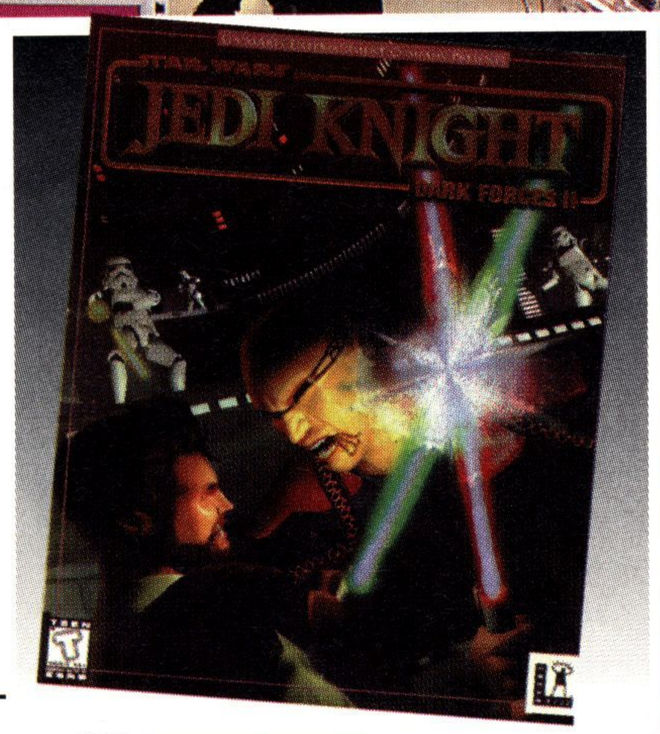
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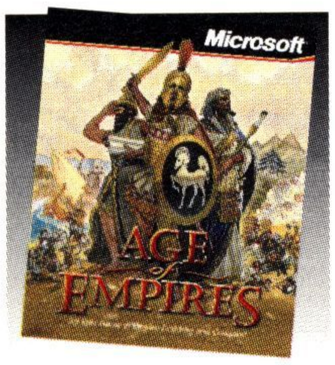
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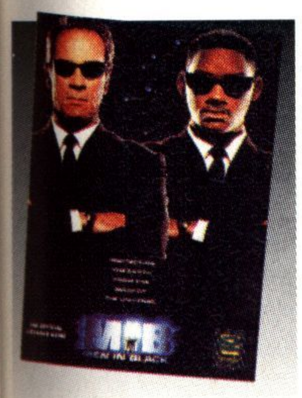


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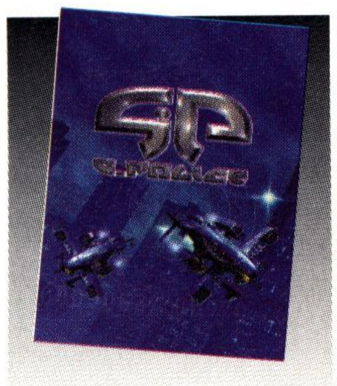


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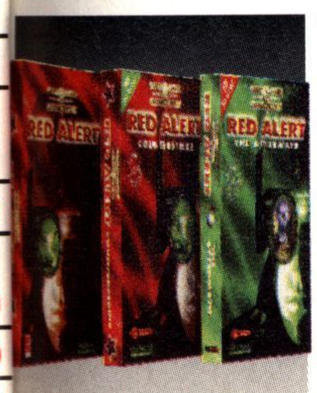


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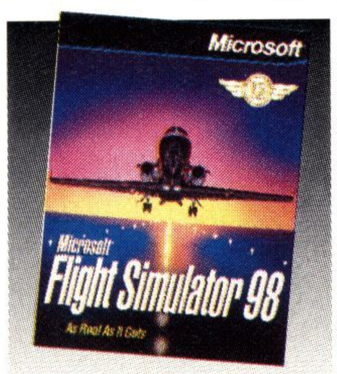
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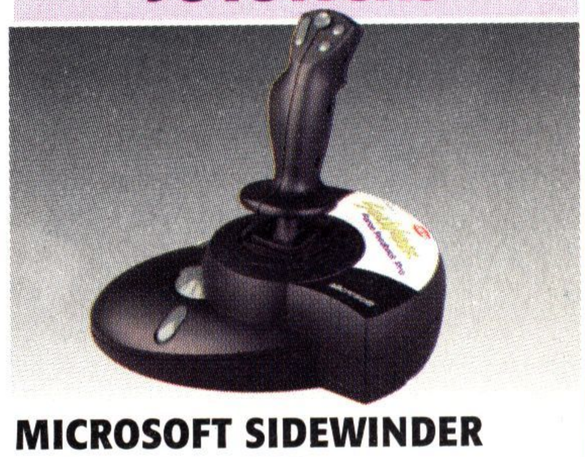
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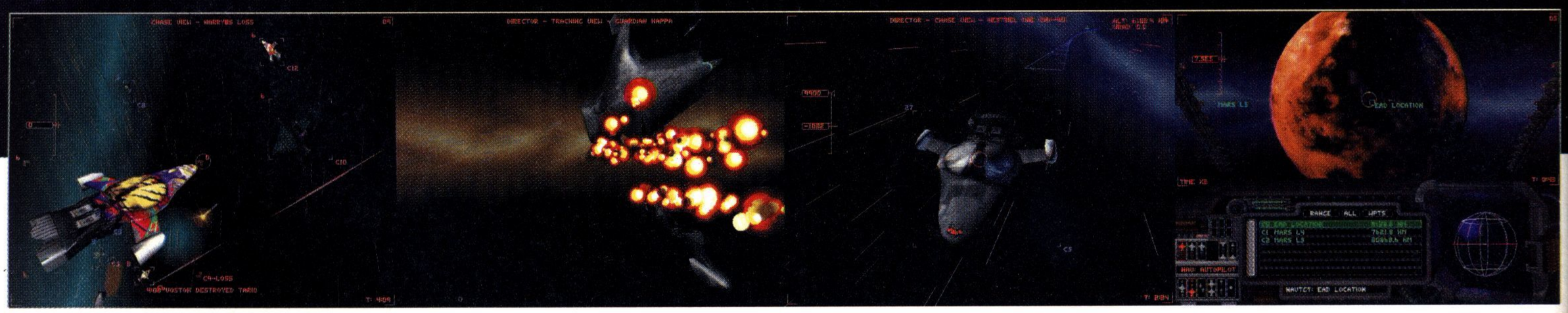
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Contain the situation. Through
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An atmosphere so intense, a story so immense that no two games are ever the same

BATTLESPIRE

We needed someone used to spending time in dank, squalid hellpits filled with bizarre creatures with danger at every turn. Paul Presley once holidayed in Sunderland. Who better?



JUST AS ORIGIN'S ULTIMA SERIES underwent a schizophrenic stage with the Underworld line, becoming two separate series under one umbrella, so too has the Elder Scrolls. Battlespire is the start of a 'Legends' range and, like Underworld before it, utilises the very latest in cutting-edge first-person technology. But then doesn't everything these days?

Is this a Daggerfall I see before me?

For all its success, the *Daggerfall* range has never enjoyed the same level of attention as the far trendier *Ultima* series. Sure, they sold well. But what do sales figures mean when compared to big stands at computer shows and extravagant press junkets to haunted mansions in Texas? Er, well anyway...

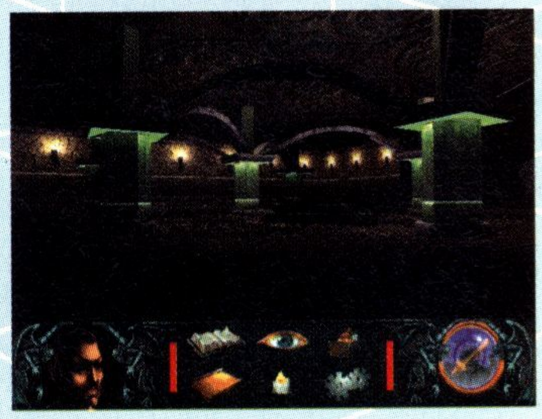
The point I'm making is that Bethesda's RPGs have been unfairly overlooked by the media. While Origin were waving all manner of shiny trinkets at us, the *Elder Scrolls* series has enjoyed a lot of success with the punters. If anything, *Battlespire* should go some way towards redressing that balance as we shallow media types are currently pouncing on anything that uses a first-person engine, and Bethesda have put enough traditional RPG and other unique elements into this effort to prevent us from calling it just another *Hexen II* clone.

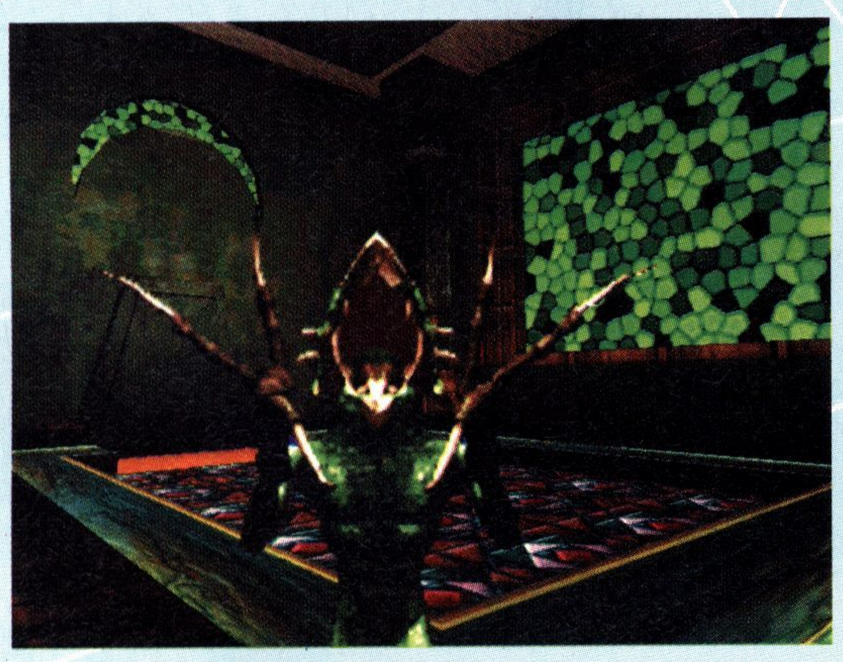
It's a Hexen II clone

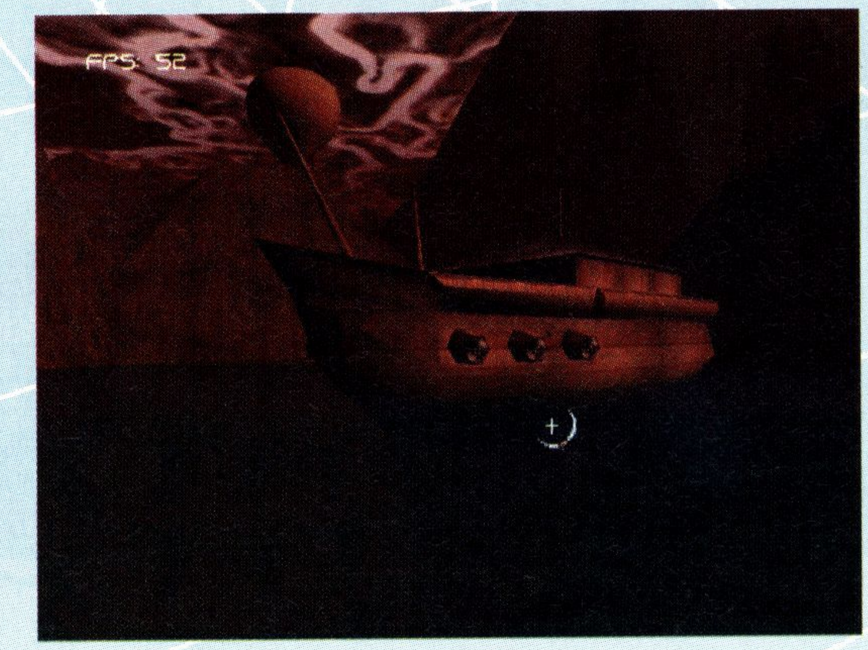
The story goes a little something like this *(turns his back, ruffles hair, faces front again while talking in a deep James Earl Jones voice)*... It was a time of war. Of all the warriors on the fantasy world of Tamriel, only the bravest and strongest were chosen for the Emperor's elite Imperial Guards. But before they could join, they had to face the ultimate test of skill: the Battlespire. Set in an alternate dimensional plane, the Battlespire tests each warrior's abilities to the fullest in seven unique challenges. Those who succeed are deemed worthy, those who fail are shunned for evermore and have to become daytime TV presenters.

***"Players can form their own separate teams in a sort of medieval* It's A Knockout."**









(Far left) Ever since Bob Holness was replaced by Satan, the *Blockbusters'* Gold Run had become a more terrifying affair. (Top) Following the little accident with the gas oven, Colin decided it was time to fire his interior decorator. (Left) The Haven 'Short Boating Holidays' brochure didn't have these kind of pictures in it...





Product details

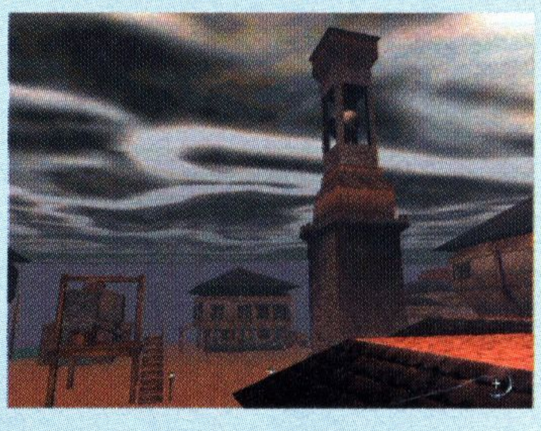
Developer: Bethesda Softworks

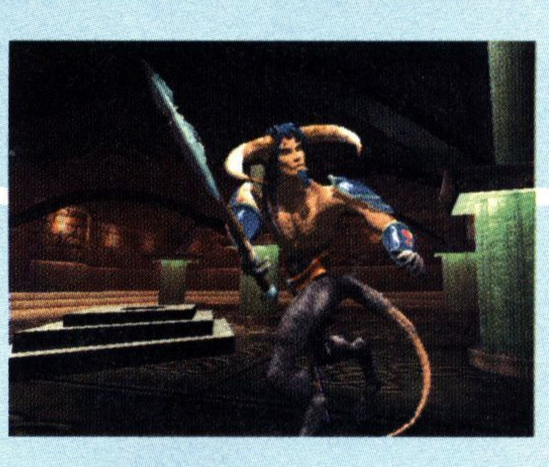
Publisher: Virgin Interactive

Website: www.bethsoft.com

Release Date: Early 1988







(Top) I'll bet shopping for pants is a bit tricky. (Middle) Outdoor locations are one of the key features of *Battlespire*'s graphics engine. (Bottom) Perhaps it's time to leave...

However, on your arrival at the School for Slaughterers, you discover something is wrong. The Battlespire has been conquered by an evil demon and his forces and the route home has been sealed. There's nothing left but to fight your way to the end, destroy the invader and hope you can return.

All the traditional role-playing elements are in place. Character creation allows you to choose from several types of career (warrior, wizard, thief, postman, etc) and juggle statistics and skills that will all have an effect on how well your character performs. Thanks to a customisable spell creation system, magic is everywhere – players can invent their own sorcery on the fly as it were. NPC interaction means more than just finding different weapons to kill your foes with, thanks to tribes that are all working to their own agenda. The worlds are richly detailed enough to make sure you lose any remaining shreds of a social life and, naturally, everyone has names lifted straight out of the nutty book (the evil demon goes by the moniker Mehrunes Dagon, for instance).

So what's new?

Battlespire's biggest feature is the XnGine, er, engine that powers the game. If you remember *Terminator: Skynet* you'll have experienced an early version of XnGine. However, the system has had a full revamp, putting it on a par with the likes of *Hexen II* and *Unreal*, fully supporting 3Dfx cards or relying on impressive internal software to support resolutions up to 640x480 with 32K colours. The one advantage that Bethesda are hoping will bury the opposition is the ability to simulate outdoor locations, such as rolling hills, as well as dungeons – the designers are keen to point out that John Carmack has admitted that it's a feature that the *Quake* engine isn't capable of. The player will encounter cities, rivers, temples, windmills and castles to explore, as well as travelling around by boat and even hot air balloon.



The one area that might cause metaphorical chafing is the use of sprites over polygons for the characters. The defence is that you can get a lot more detail on sprites and they will be able to move quicker than polygon characters, especially when there's a lot happening at once. The argument against is that they don't look as advanced as either the rest of the engine or the game's rivals.

"You know that we are all part of a team – you go first though."

As is rapidly becoming the norm for any first-person game, multi-player options abound. Even here *Battlespire* attempts to be unique. Aside from the traditional deathmatch and co-operative modes, there's also a rather interesting team play option. Players can form separate teams and take on the game's challenges in a sort of medieval *It's A Knockout.* I can hear Stuart Hall laughing psychotically now. Hopefully, *Battlespire*'s mixture of up-to-date technology and traditional RPG elements should add up to one of the better first-person games coming out over the next few months. We'll let you know shortly. Z



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MEMO

From: Sven Olsen
Dept.Head of Processing.

To: Steve Hastings
Managing Director.

Subj: Confidential.

Date: 24th October, 1997.

Re: SIMON PITMAN

Further to our recent discussion regarding Simon's behavioural problems, I can confirm that the situation is now becoming intolerable.

Simon seems to be having a breakdown. Yesterday I found him scuttling around on all fours pretending to be a lizard. This morning he was 'roaring' and became quite violent.

He claims he is on a quest to find a spell that will help him control his shape changing ability(!!). Worse still, he will only answer to the name 'Luther, son of the Sorceress, Scotia.'

We need to take action now. He is disrupting the department and worrying other members of staff.

What is our legal standpoint?

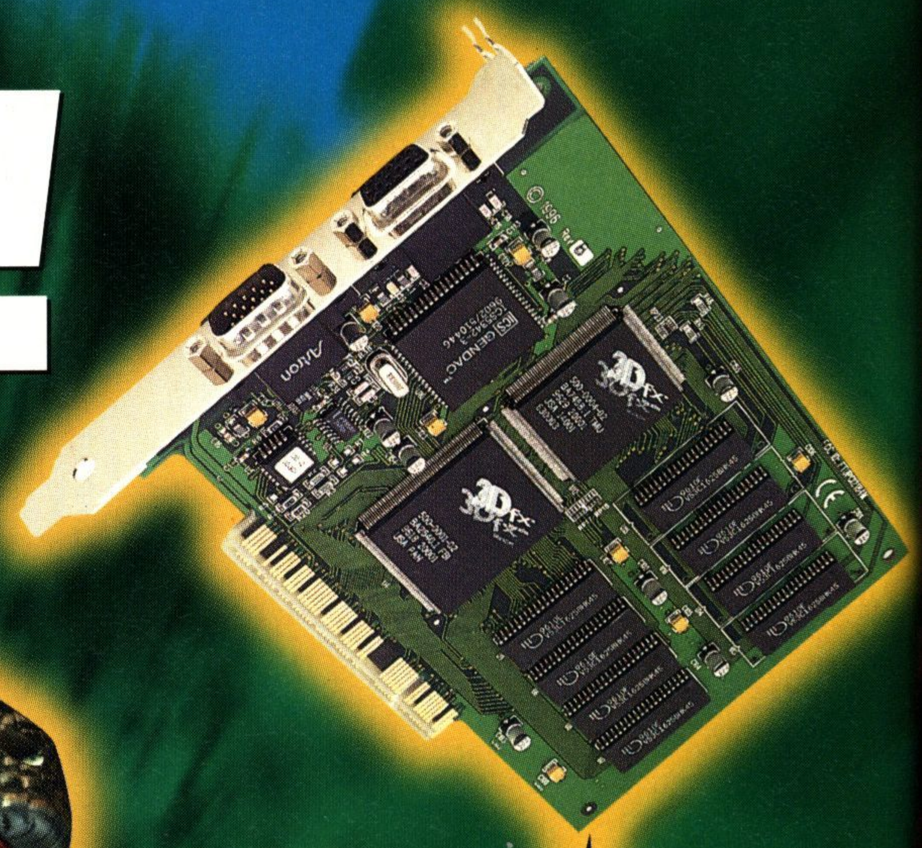
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WIN!

a 3Dfx card courtesy of Acclaim



KEEP UP WITH THE GAMING JONESES WITH A 3DFX card and a copy of *Turok* from Acclaim. *Turok* scored an impressive 90 in this issue and the general consensus of opinion in the office is that it's a much better single-player game than *Quake* (how many times have you heard that in the mag recently? Are you listening iD?). It even looks significantly more impressive than the much-lauded N64 version, thanks to our friends at 3Dfx. But hey, don't take our word for it, enter our fab compo and you could soon be putting *Turok* to the test yourself. We've got ten 3Dfx cards to give away, and each one comes with a copy of *Turok: Dinosaur Hunter*. Answer the question below and send your completed form to the address provided and we'll pop your name into a hat with all the other hopefuls.



Prize may differ from that shown.

Question:

Turok's gorgeous visuals pay homage to the awesome power of...

☐ Hercules ☐ 3Dfx ☐ Arnold Schwarzenegger

Name:

Job Title:

Company Name:

Address:

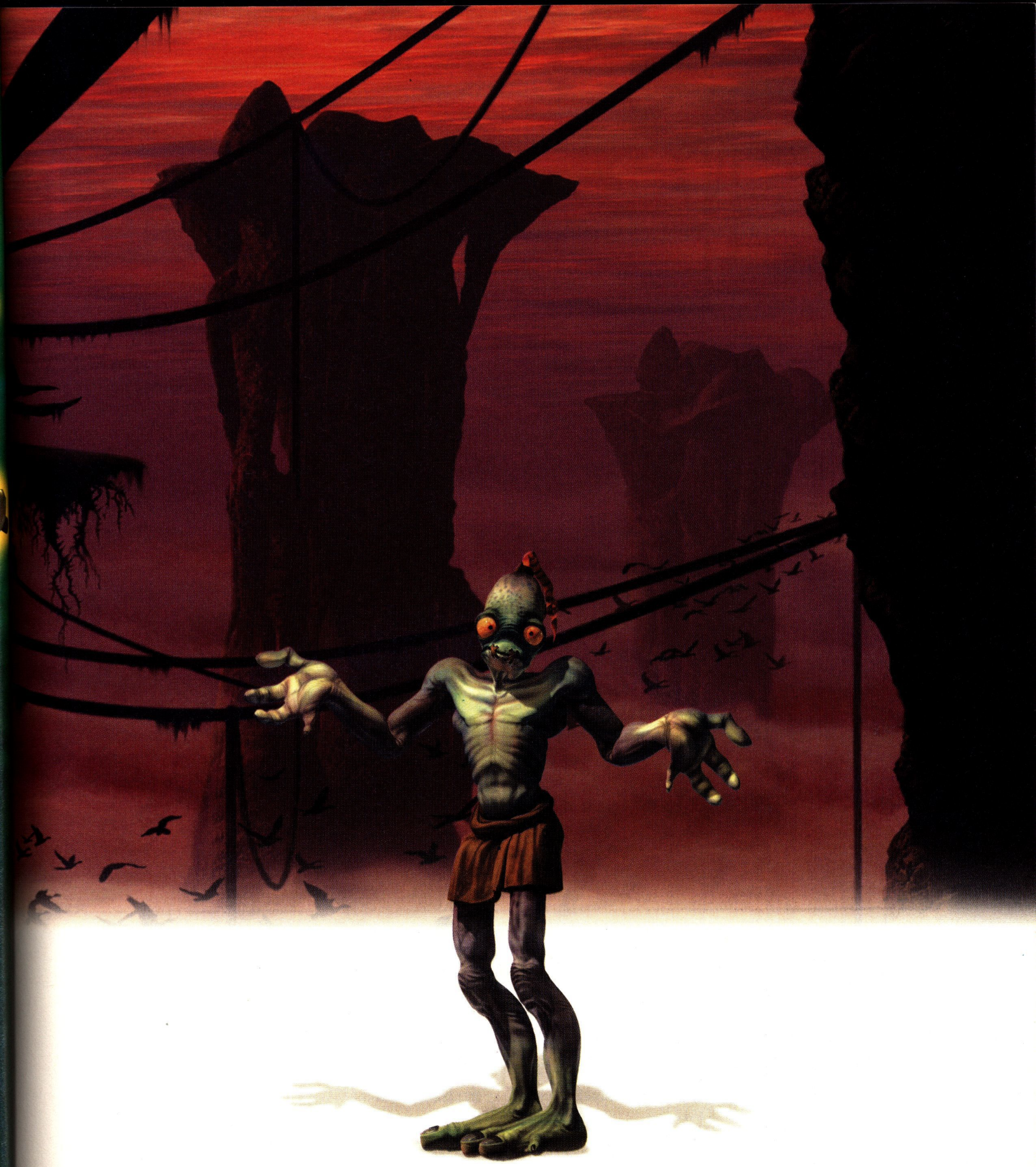
Postcode:

Daytime Telephone Number:

Send your completed entries along with your name and address to: PC Zone *Turok* competition, CPCZ7XA, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavillions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 OBQ.

☐ Please tick if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies. ☐ Tick if under 18 years of age.

Rules: All entries to be received by 1 January 1998. One entry per household – repeated entries will be binned. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision will be final. Any other rules we've forgotten apply too.



He's skinny. He wears a loincloth. He has no weapons.
(He's the guy that you play.)

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don't get mad: get elum



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possession is 9/10ths of the law



one-dimensional shooter. Solve wicked situations and wicked enemies. But, not in some wallpaper puzzle game.

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Girls on the

It's a question that has perplexed the greatest minds since 1978. Why don't girls play computer games? In the interests of research, we plied a select quartet with booze and fags, stuck them in front of some PCs and asked them. Charlie Brooker was the man with the microphone.



WOMEN DON'T PLAY GAMES. NOT COMPUTER games, anyway. At least that's what the statistics keep on telling us. In our most recent reader survey it transpired that around 98 per cent of *PC Zone*'s readership is male. Fair enough. We're not going to berate anyone for being male. But on the other hand, isn't it all a wee bit disturbing? After all, games are simply a form of entertainment, like music, television or the movies – so why should games be an overwhelmingly male preserve, and the others not? Why have our sisters deserted us? What, in short, are we all doing wrong?

In an attempt to shed some light on the subject, *PC Zone* quickly rounded up a small group of bona fide females and carted them along to *Shoot and Surf*, the accommodating multi-player games café in central London. There we plied them with cheap wine and cigarettes and forced them – yes, *forced them* – to play games against each other. Not just any old games, mind. Games that we know and love, all-time classics that we've dedicated large parts of our

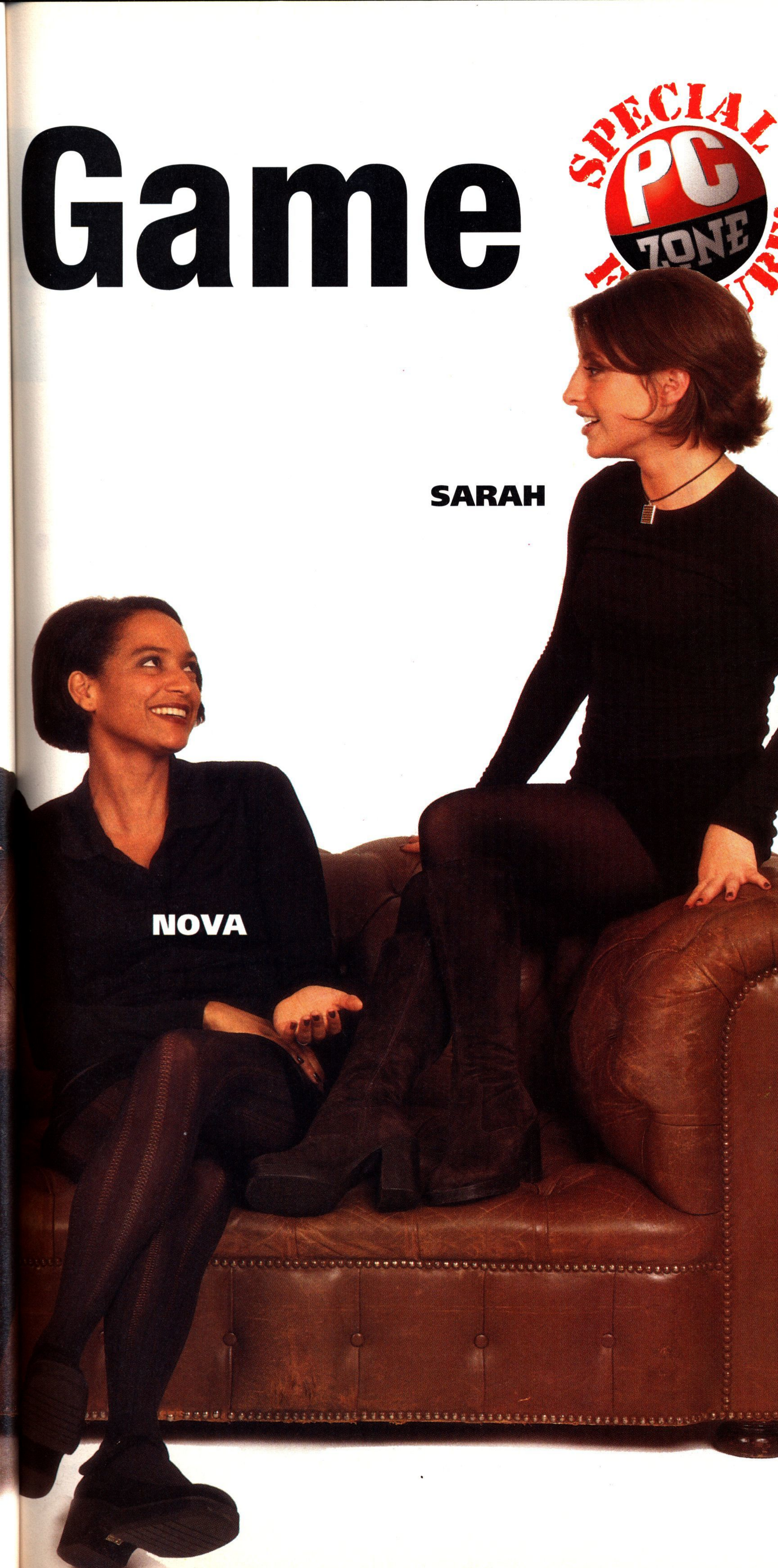
> ***"Women do and say little of import or interest, yet our hand was forced by the spirit of research."***

lives to: network *Quake*, multi-player *Command & Conquer: Red Alert*, and of course the cartoonesque *Little Big Adventure 2* (surely they'd love the cutesy graphics?).

Under normal circumstances, women do and say little of import or interest, yet in this case our hand was forced by the spirit of research – so we actually *paid attention* to them for once. Actually sat down and listened. Their pearls of wisdom are splattered across these pages like the proverbial messy necklace. We suggest you read what they have to say – especially if you're involved in the industry yourself. And when you're done, glance brusquely at our conclusion. You great big hunk of *man*, you.

Game

SPECIAL PC ZONE FEATURE!



THE 'GAMES'

Quake

What better way to ease our ladylike ensemble into the sophisticated world of digital diversioneering than a prolonged session of *Quake*, the convivial and engaging multi-player slaughterhouse sim? After initial problems with the control system, our female friends soon cast aside their inhibitions and began gunning each other down like pigs. Soon the air was filled with laughter, good-natured swearing, and an uncomfortable amount of high-pitched shrieking, the likes of which men can never really achieve unless they're having their testicles slammed in a car door...

Laura: Oh my God, it's really *fast*! Aaahh!

Nova: How do I move? Why am I looking at the floor?

Sarah: Shit! I just shot someone...

PCZ: So, are you enjoying yourselves?

Danielle: Yeah. Can't talk right now. I'm busy. (*Suddenly stops)* Ergh, that's *disgusting!*

What is?

Danielle: That. That mutilated arm or whatever it is.

Does it make you want to stop playing?

Danielle: No. We have to live with the consequences of our violent actions. I don't see why we should escape that.

So there's a valid lesson to be learned from *Quake*?

Danielle: Yeah. If you shoot somebody they are going to get hurt and it's all going to get very messy.

Nova: Do I have to kill the others or can I just kill myself?

Try to concentrate on the others.

Laura: I'm just dying. All the time.

Sarah: (Pointing) What does that thing mean?

That's the number of kills you've got. You're in second place.

Sarah: Second? Who's first?

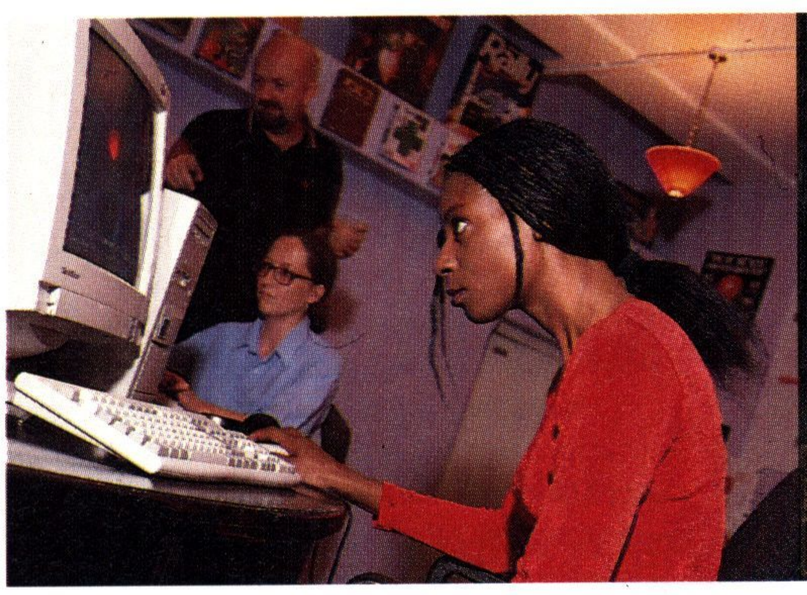
Danielle is.

Sarah: Oh *is* she now? Right then... (*Almost on cue, she destroys Danielle with a randomly-aimed rocket*) Ergh! Is that her *head*?

Yeah. Check out that glassy stare.

Sarah: Oh yeah. That's a real Sunday morning, early hours stare that is. I know that look well.

CONCLUSION: Despite early reservations, most of our group clearly enjoyed their *Quake* session. It seems that no matter how much you abhor the gratuitous depiction of sickening violence, the temptation to blow another human being into a chunky red slew soon over-rides any qualms you may have about actually participating. ▶







"The problem with* Quake *is that you need to use both hands to play it. Which doesn't leave a hand free for drinking and smoking. It's things like that, that turn women away."

◂ Command and Conquer: Red Alert

Oh dear. In our own patronising little way, we'd expected *les femmes* to thoroughly enjoy *Red Alert*. We thought they'd appreciate the simple controls, the pick-up-and-play design, the crisp visuals and the strategic gameplay. However, we couldn't have been more wrong...

Laura: I don't get it! What's the aim of the game?
PCZ: Think of it as a game of animated toy soldiers.
Laura: But what's it *about*?

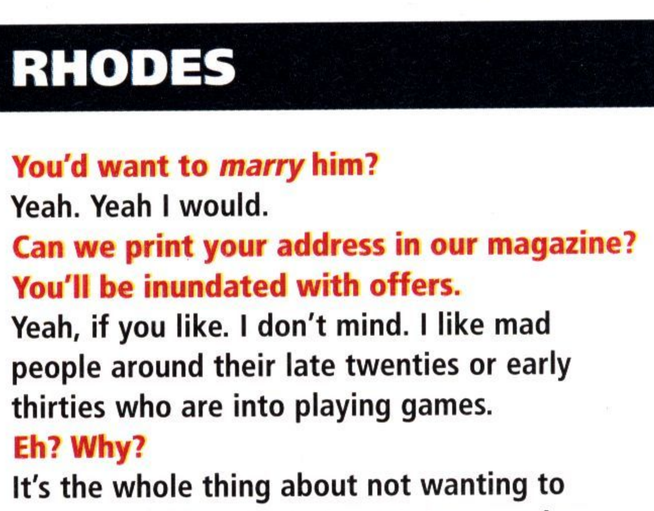
DANIELLE RHODES



AGE: 30 "and proud of it"
OCCUPATION: Writer/Actress

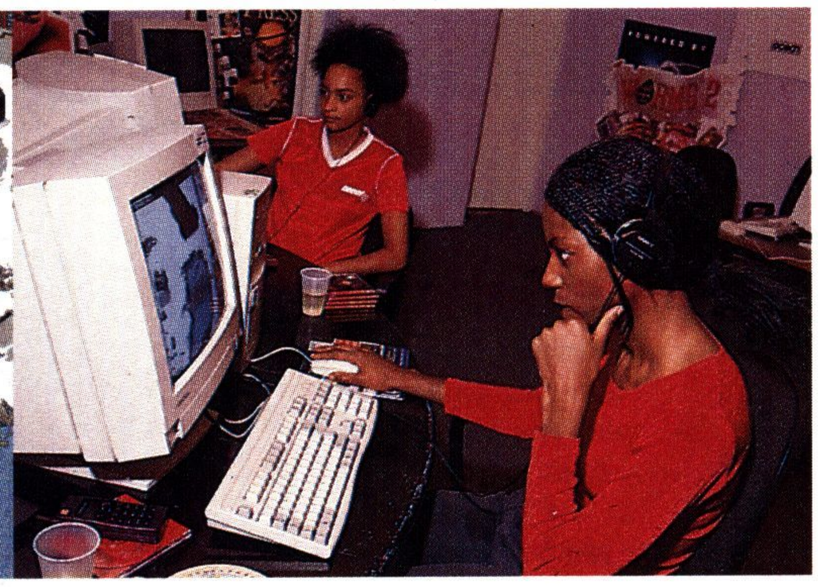
Danielle is an imposing figure; about a thousand feet tall, and with the good looks you'd expect from an ex-model. She's also a fervent PC gamesplayer on the sly. Her favourite titles include *Red Alert* and *Populous* – indeed anything with a strategic bent.

Would you agree with the following statement: "All computer games are aimed at perpetually adolescent male outcasts"?
I would. They're aimed at smelly boys. They're the people that normally buy them. That's the main market.
Is there something intrinsically 'male' about most games, or are they capable of appealing to women?
I think they *can* appeal to women as well, but personally I don't get off on games like *Doom*. I don't get any joy from going around killing. That's pointless. It's different with games where there might be violence, but you also gain something in the end. You gain land or something like that. I prefer something more constructive than just shooting.
If you were going out with someone who spent, say, two to three hours a night playing computer games, would you chuck them?
Oh no. I'd want to marry him.
You'd want to *marry* him?
Yeah. Yeah I would.
Can we print your address in our magazine?
You'll be inundated with offers.
Yeah, if you like. I don't mind. I like mad people around their late twenties or early thirties who are into playing games.
Eh? Why?
It's the whole thing about not wanting to grow up. I think that's *fun*. It's just another way for people to enjoy themselves.
Does your boyfriend play games?
No, he doesn't play them at all. His friends give him games, but I play them.
If you were running a software house, what sort of game would you develop in order to appeal to women?
F**k... (Long pause) shit...
What, a coprophilia simulator?
No, no. I think, for me at least, it would be a game based more on strategy than shooting. Something more creative and fulfilling. Not just simply destructive.



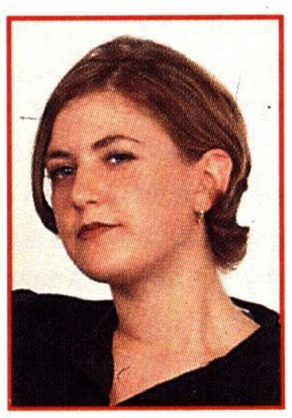
Just kill everybody.
Laura: But my men keep dying! Wait! Oh my God! They're shooting people!
It's a *war*, for heaven's sake.
Laura: But now I've only got one man left. And why isn't he going up there?
He's at the top of the playing area. He can't go any higher than that.
Laura: Yes he can.
No he can't. And look out for that tank. It's started shooting at you.
Laura: It can't get me though. (*Inevitably, it does*) Oh. That's not *fair*. This game's shit. I hate it.
Nova: How am I supposed to know which of these tanks are mine? Why can't I see everything?
Sarah: Yeah, what is this game's problem? Why would anyone want to play this? It's a bloody *nightmare*! It takes so long to get into, you'd have to be really sad to even bother. You'd have to be bored out of your fookin *wits*. It takes forever to work out what's happening, and then you get all territorial because you've got no life, and no... It's nothing pretty. And the graphics are a bit shit as well.
They're not *that* bad...
Sarah: Look at the screen. Look at it. What can you see? Blotches. And white stuff.
That's snow.
Sarah: It's like a bad patchwork quilt sewn by someone's blind grandmother. And it's shite.
Danielle: I disagree – I like it.
Sarah: You've played it before.
Danielle: Yeah, I have. It's one of my favourites. It's quite violent, but there's a lot to it. You have to *think*.
Did it take you a long time to get into it?
Danielle: No, it appealed to me straight away.
Do you think there are any valuable 'life lessons' to be drawn from the game?
Danielle: Yeah. Build up your defences before you go in and attack. Make sure you've got enough pillboxes and turrets around, enough heavy armoured trucks...
That's not really that useful in everyday life though, is it?
Danielle: It is! Make sure you're alright in yourself before you go out and attack the world. That's what it's trying to say.
Nova: I don't like this, but I like that fighting game... what's it called? *Kickboxer* or something...
PCZ: *Streetfighter II*?
Nova: Yeah, I like that one. (*Into interviewer's ear:)* You get to beat-up men in it.
Sarah (*Perking up considerably*): *Streetfighter?* Now you're talking. I'm an absolute *star* at that.





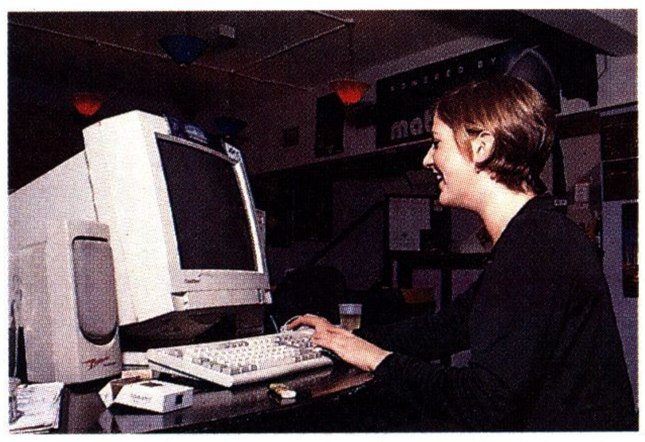
LAURA BOLAM

AGE: 19
OCCUPATION: Production Manager, Dennis Publishing



Laura was the youngest – and judging by the amount of wine she polished off, thirstiest – of our gaming guinea pigs. As we shall see, she likes computer games about as much as I like fracturing my skull on a door jamb...

Do you think all computer games are aimed at 'smelly boys'?
Yes. I can't stand them.
You can't stand games?
Yeah. I just think they're a massive waste of time. I can't understand how people can get so obsessed with them. I hate them.
Do you think they're too violent?
I'm not bothered by the violence at all. I just find them a bit childish. Or I did. Before today, I just thought they were really boring.
So actually playing a few games has changed your opinion of them?
Well, a little bit. But I don't think I'll start regularly playing them or anything.
If you were designing a range of games for women, what kind of changes would you make?
None. They're fine as they are. Women just avoid playing these kind of games because it's really anti-social.
But you've been sitting here playing *Quake* and *Red Alert* against a group of people. Doesn't that count as social interaction?
No, I don't think it does. I'd rather sit down and talk to people than scream at them and chase them down dead ends and machine-gun them to death (*Wuss – Ed*). I hate it when I go round to a bloke's house and it's just him and his mates all playing games and not talking to each other.
Would you go out with someone who played a lot of games?
God, no. No way. I couldn't stand that at all.
So if you were in love and your boyfriend started playing games, would you chuck him on the spot?
No, I'd try to talk him out of it.
And if he wouldn't give up, would you stab him repeatedly in the face with a trowel?
Errgh, no. What a horrible thing to say.

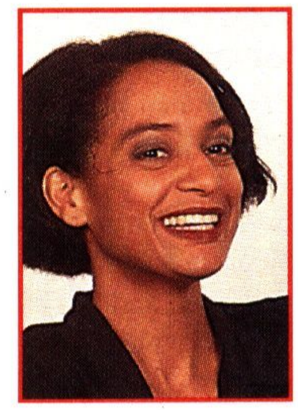




(Above) A bemused Nova and Danielle look on whilst Sarah tries to get off her chair.

NOVA CLAY

AGE: 28
OCCUPATION: Production Manager for *Red or Dead*.

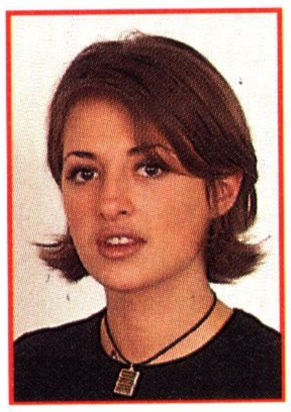


Nova hails from the world of fashion, and claims to know "nothing" about computer games or the people who play them. Cuh. Doesn't bother us. We don't know the first thing about shirts or shoes. Or skirts. Or women. Or life in general. Um, where were we?

Why do many more men play computer games than women?
Women have other interests which take priority.
Such as what?
(Laughs) I'm not saying. But when I have any spare time, I like to... *relax.*
And you don't find games relaxing?
I'm sure they are when you know what you're doing. If they were easier to control then the game might be more challenging. As they are they're a bit of a chore.
Do you think women are put off by the violence?
Not really. I think women can take it as well as men. It's just men find the violence entertaining in itself.
If you were designing a game specifically for women, what changes would you make?
I'd make it easier to control for one thing. They're far too hard to get into.
Is that because women are cack-handed twats who are too stupid to understand the controls?
No! Not at all. But we don't tend to be as familiar with computers as men, so it's harder for us to pick up. Besides, it all depends on how much patience you've got. I'd give up quickly because it would get on my nerves.
Has actually playing these games changed your opinion about them in any way?
Well – I quite like them, but... (*Suddenly, Nova bags her first* Quake *kill. The corridors are momentarily festooned with blood and spinning body parts*).
Errrgh. That really *is* disgusting. Is that a head?
If you were going out with someone who played games every night, how would you react?
If it was a game I could join in with, I would play with them. A nice two player game. Nothing really violent. Something that tests your abilities rather than just filling the screen with blood.
Don't you think there's skill involved in *Quake*?
Yes I do. But I can't see what skill there is beyond your ability to use the mouse.
What about stalking? Hiding? Spatial awareness? Stealth? The ability to hunt down your friends and blow their stomachs out through their backs?
Yeah, but what do you actually gain from all of that?
Well, what do you gain from anything? What's to gain from, say, water-skiing?
Enjoyment. Without the severed heads.



SARAH HEDLEY



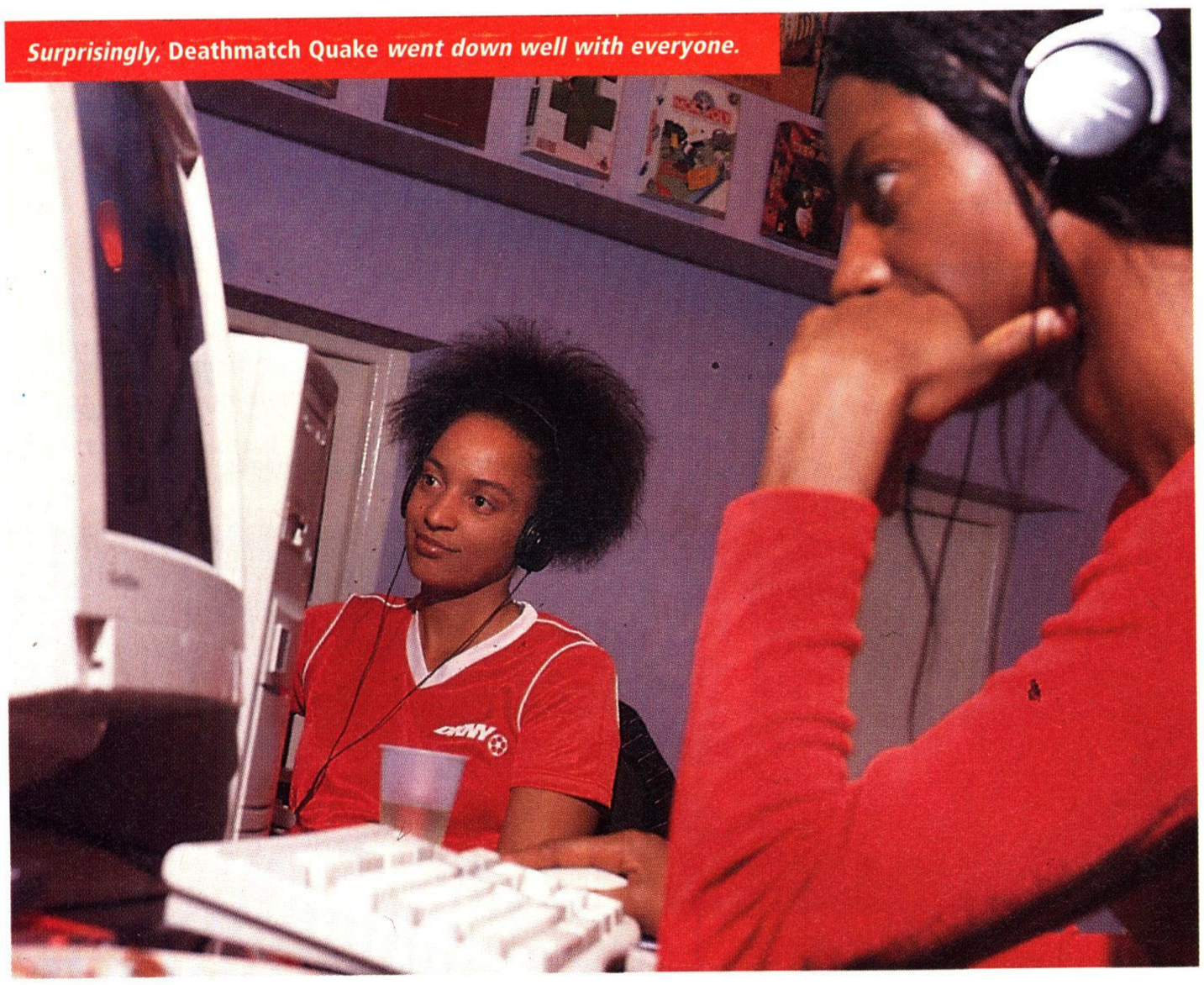
AGE: 23
OCCUPATION:
Production Manager, actually.

Sarah is *Zone*'s fun-size Geordie Ad Production manager, and can often be found hiding beneath thimbles, perched atop wedding cakes, or simply waving a fist at the heavens and loudly berating God for making her so *fookin* short. She's also 'going out' with our Editor Jeremy, so the previous line probably won't make it into the mag. And if it does, we're *both* in trouble.

Why don't games appeal to women as much as they do to men?
Hmm. Well, you see, the problem with *this* game (*Quake*) is that you need to use both hands to play it. Which doesn't leave a hand free for drinking and smoking. And loads more women smoke than men. It's things like that, that turn the women away.
So women don't get addicted to games because they're already hopelessly addicted to...
Cigarettes and alcohol. Yeah. And talking. Talking's a good activity for women to be involved with. It's very social.
Do you think men are infinitely sadder than women?
Well, that's debatable. But probably true.
Do you find games too violent?
Not too violent, no. The only bad thing is that the birds in games are all too gorgeous. Can we have some fat, drudgey librarian heroines please, so *we* feel sexy and superior?
The male characters are equally unbelievable, though. All those big, muscley, macho blokes...
Yeah, but women don't fancy muscley blokes. That's why muscley blokes go with tarts. Tarts with perms. Real women don't fancy blokes like that at all. Whereas men *do* fancy Lara Croft types. And we can't possibly compete. You look at one of them Lara Croft types and it makes you feel like... what was the name of the ugly girl in *Scooby Doo*?
Thelma.
Yeah, Thelma. They make you feel like Thelma. As opposed to Daphne.
So if you were in charge of a software house, how would you design a game for women?
Include a bit of humour. And maybe get the maternal instincts going. Make the characters a bit 'cute'. Oh, and I'll tell you what I *do* like the sound of – that Internet game where you get to slap the Spice Girls. (http://194.112.40.4/Urban75/spicebelt.htm)
But would you make the lead character male or female?
Well, you'd keep Lara Croft, right, but instead of having her doing all that swimming and flexing her arse muscles and stuff, you'd put another woman in the game and have them go after each other. A bitch fight with another woman. *That* is what women want to see in computer games.



Surprisingly, **Deathmatch Quake** *went down well with everyone.*





"I got one!" – Yep, but everyone else left hours ago.

▶ But *Streetfighter's* full of horrible physical violence as well, isn't it?
Sarah: Yeah, but there's something about it that appeals to the woman in us all.

CONCLUSION: *Red Alert* is too finicky and unsightly to appeal to the majority of women. Although those qualities don't seem to have hindered Chris Evans much.

Little Big Adventure 2

Things weren't looking good. *Red Alert* had gone down like a comedy dance at a toddler's wake, time was rapidly running out, and to cap it all *Carmageddon* wouldn't work thanks to a technical hitch. In desperation we decided to hurl the undiluted cutesieness of *LBA 2* at our feminine Juke Box Jury. It turned out to be the most popular game of the evening – despite the fact that none of them got to play it first hand. The moment the crisp, comic-strip visuals appeared on the monitor, our team started oohing and aahhing like... well, like a bunch of girls. We couldn't even put them off by highlighting some of the game's more unsavoury 'features'...

Look, you can enter 'Aggressive' mode and make Twinsen beat up his wife if you like...
Sarah: Yeah! Beat the pregnant woman!
Danielle: Can they have sex as well? Can you go back to part one and get her pregnant?
And here, look, there's a bit where he goes to a bar...
Sarah: (beaming) Now that's *cool*...
Nova: Now I *like* this one. The graphics are much better, it's got a story to it, and it's easy to pick up.
Danielle: I think it looks brilliant...
Laura: I'm sorry, but it's really really *boring*. I can't *stand* it.
Laura, you're a disgrace.
Laura: I am, aren't I?

CONCLUSION: Blind, ugly violence against pregnant women is absolutely *A-okay* so long as it's done in a cute fashion.



You read it here first – Girls just wanna slap a Spice Girl.

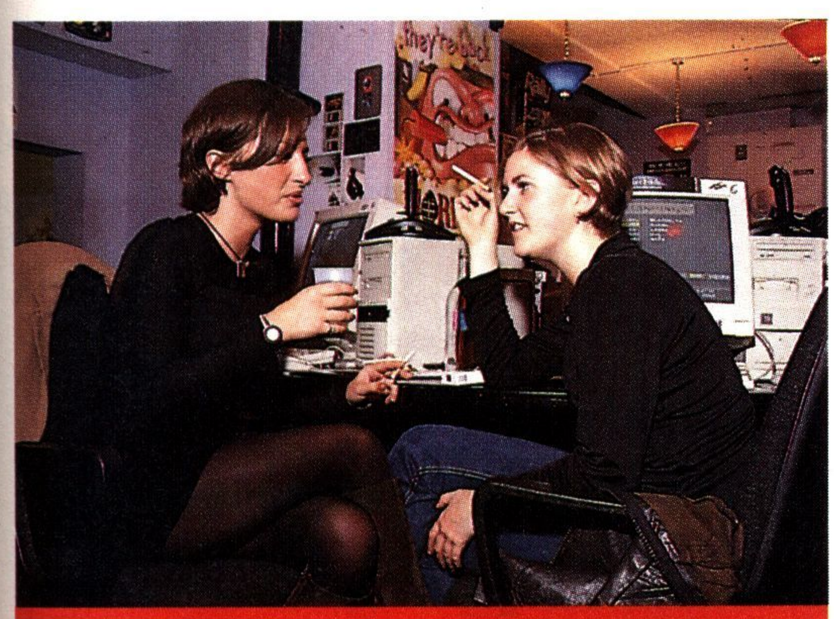


Who could resist the cutesy cartoon graphics in LBA2*?*

OUR OVERALL CONCLUSION

So why don't women like computer games? Well, the fact of the matter is – and forgive us for generalising for a moment, they *do* like them, or at least some of them – when they're actually forced to play them. But most of the time they couldn't really be bothered to play them. All of the women we spoke to felt that games were essentially inconsequential (with the exception of Danielle – and even *she* only liked games that she considered to be 'constructive'). It's hard to argue with that. Games *are* essentially inconsequential. That's one of the many reasons we like them.

While excessive in-game violence was cited by both Wil and Danielle as a major turn-off, by far the biggest dissuading factor for our sampling seemed to be the complex system of rules laid down by games such as *Red Alert*. Again, it's hard to argue with their point of view. After all, why persevere with something you regard as pointless in the first place? A feeling that we're all too familiar with when we're forced to play and review a game that quite clearly never should have got beyond the ideas stage.



Sarah and Laura discuss the merits of rocket-jumping.

For any developer attempting to make their range of titles appeal more to women, the message is far from clear – none of our (admittedly small) sample audience could reach a consensus. Certainly however, producers intent on wooing the female market would be wise to tone down the violence and accentuate the 'social interaction' angle. Apart from that, it's hard to see which changes could be made to the games themselves. It's the perception of them that needs to change.

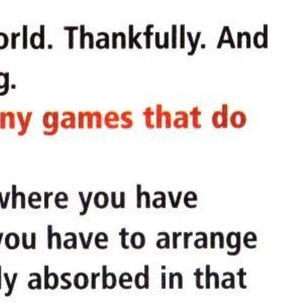
Still, perhaps our question should be turned on its head. The real mystery is not womankind's lack of interest in digital playthings – it's the fact that the male world is attracted to these senseless playthings in the first place. Where, precisely, does the appeal lie? Why do we play games? What is it we like about them? Why do we keep going back to them? What makes us sit in our bedrooms half the night playing *Red Alert*?

Here at *PC Zone*, we think we've got the answer to all the questions. Really. We're geniuses...

Why do men play games? Simple. There are only two possible reasons. Reason One: to take their mind off the fact that they don't have a girlfriend, or Reason Two: to momentarily escape the fact that they *do*. And why don't women like games? Because they're too well-adjusted to need them and too impatient to persevere with them.

That's settled then. Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus. Now why don't we just learn to play together? Z

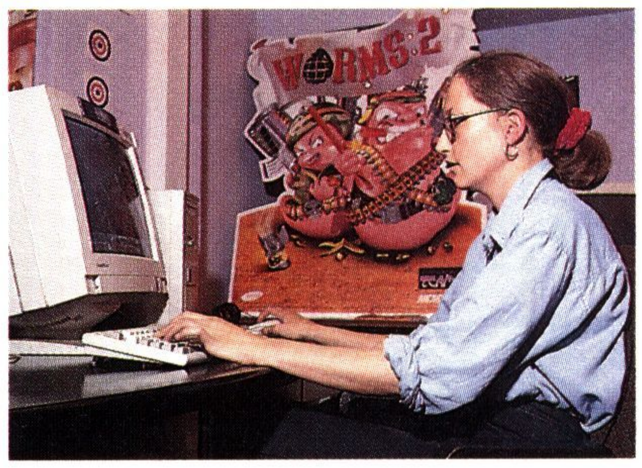
WIL ROBERTS



AGE: 36
OCCUPATION: Administrator and artist

Wil clearly keeps herself busy: she couldn't stay very long on the evening at *Shoot and Surf*, and when we came to do the sofa photo shoot a week later, she was in Spain with her partner (who was touring with his band, *Gallon Drunk*). She was not impressed by *Quake* in the slightest.

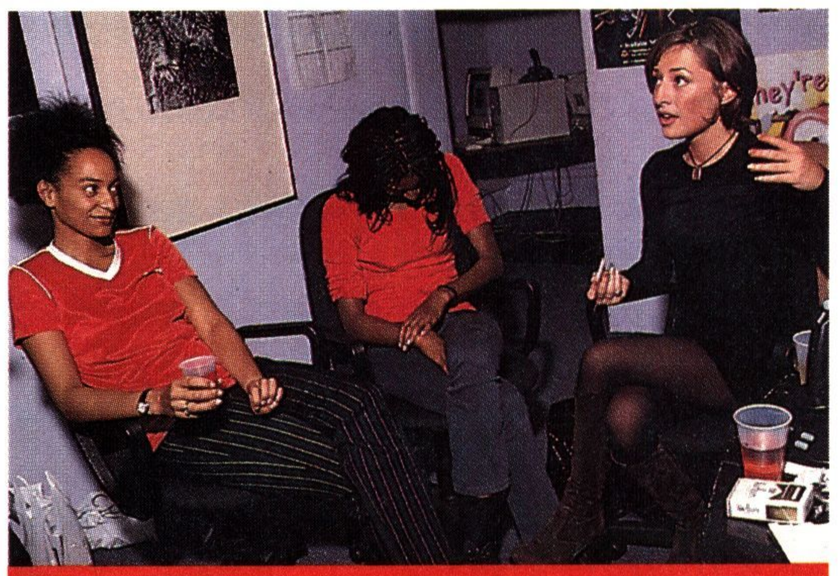
Do you think all games are aimed at overgrown boys?
They're aimed at boys *and* overgrown boys.
Why?
Most of them seem to focus on violence – silly violence.
Oh yeah? And what have you got against violence?
It's just not part of my world. Thankfully. And I don't find it entertaining.
Have you come across any games that do entertain you?
Yes. A *Tetris*-style game where you have blocks falling down and you have to arrange them. I can get completely absorbed in that and lose all track of time.
Why?
Because it's just me versus the machine and not an imaginary foe. It's like doing a crossword – it's just you against the setter. It's a one on one contest, but it doesn't involve destruction – it involves guile and skill.
Could you envisage a multi-player game where you take on other people, minus the violence?
Oh yes. There are plenty of games like that. Games like *Bridge*, or *Dominoes*, or *Chess*, where you use skill in a non-destructive fashion, and you can derive an immense amount of satisfaction from being luckier or cleverer than your opponents.
But most games are still based on conflict of some kind. *Chess* is a representation of a battle. So is *Quake*. Isn't there at least some similarity there?
Well... yes... but *Quake* represents physical violence in a particularly excessive way.
Do you think it's worrisome that people spend hours playing games like *Quake* against strangers on the Internet? Is it bad for them?
I don't think it's any worse for you than watching a lot of television, which is something I tend to do. I'd actually find it more appealing to play with people on the Internet than in a room with people I know, because that's kind of exciting. They're in different countries at different times of day, you've never met them and you never will. You have to use your imagination.
So, hey, like, do you reckon on-line games could ever replace the need for war?
(Laughing). No. Because war is about physical property, not property in your head.
But it could be, couldn't it? We could sort of talk people into believing that it was.
Er... well, probably not, but it'd be worth a go.
So actually playing *Quake* hasn't changed your opinion about games at all?
No. If I had *Quake* at home, I wouldn't play it. It didn't really get me going.
But you looked like you were having fun. Didn't you enjoy murdering people just a *teeny* bit?
No – I enjoyed *surviving*.



SHOOT 'N' SURF

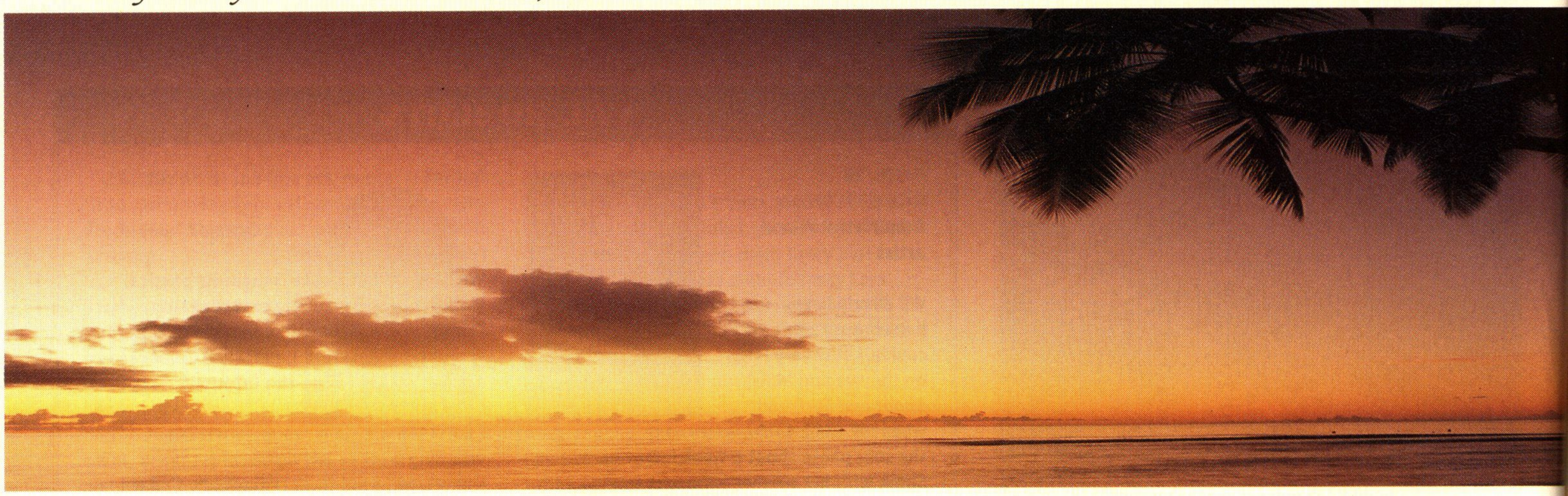
Want to play multi-player *Quake* and *C&C: Red Alert*? Live near London? Then get yourself down to Shoot & Surf, 13 New Oxford Street, London W1CA 1VA - The nearest tube is Tottenham Court Road (Central & Northern lines). Call them on 0171 419 1183 for more information. N.B. We can't guarentee that there'll be any girls there, but you will have a lot of fun.

SHOOT 'N' SURF



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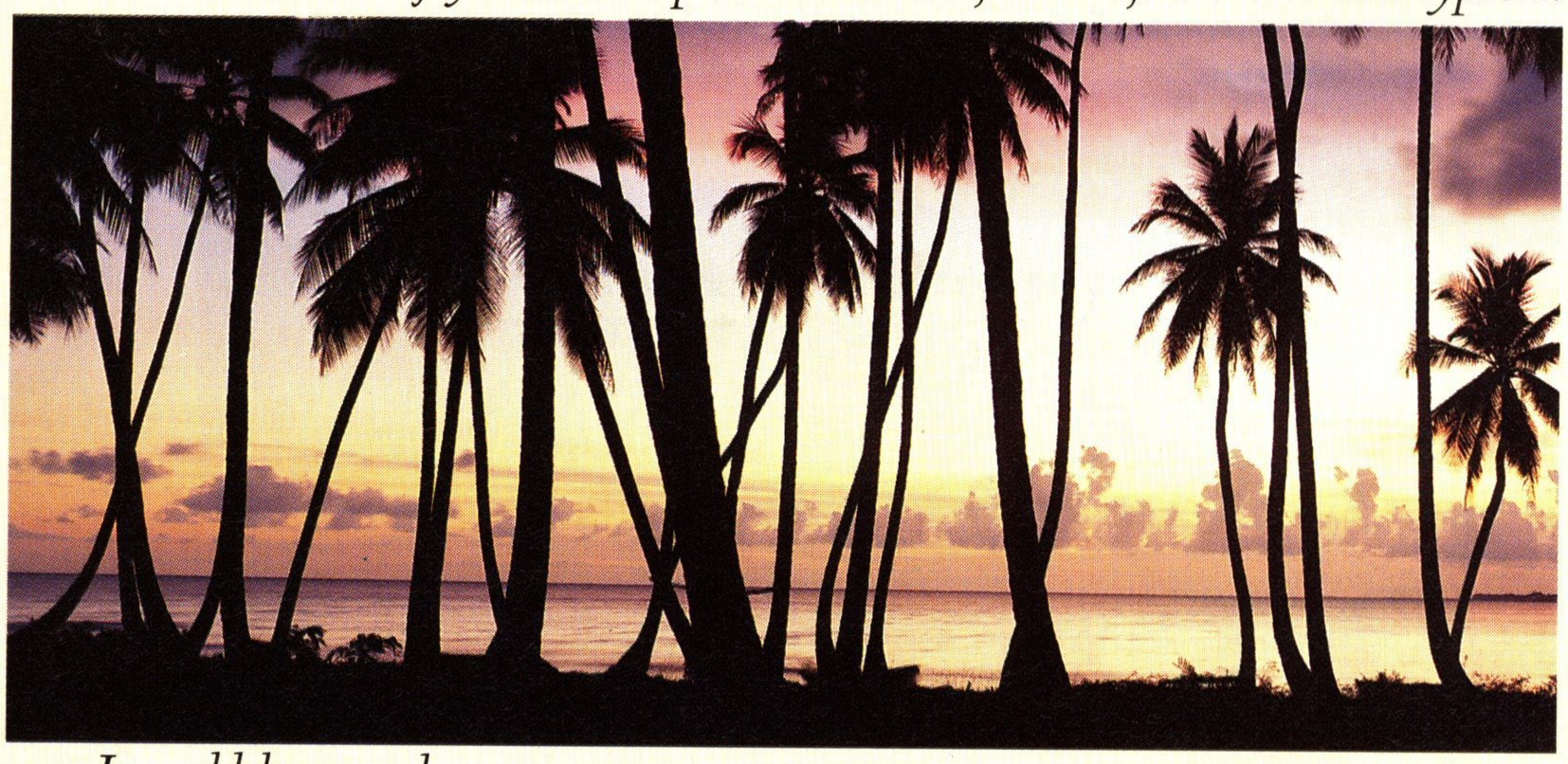
But there are plenty of other pastimes to occupy

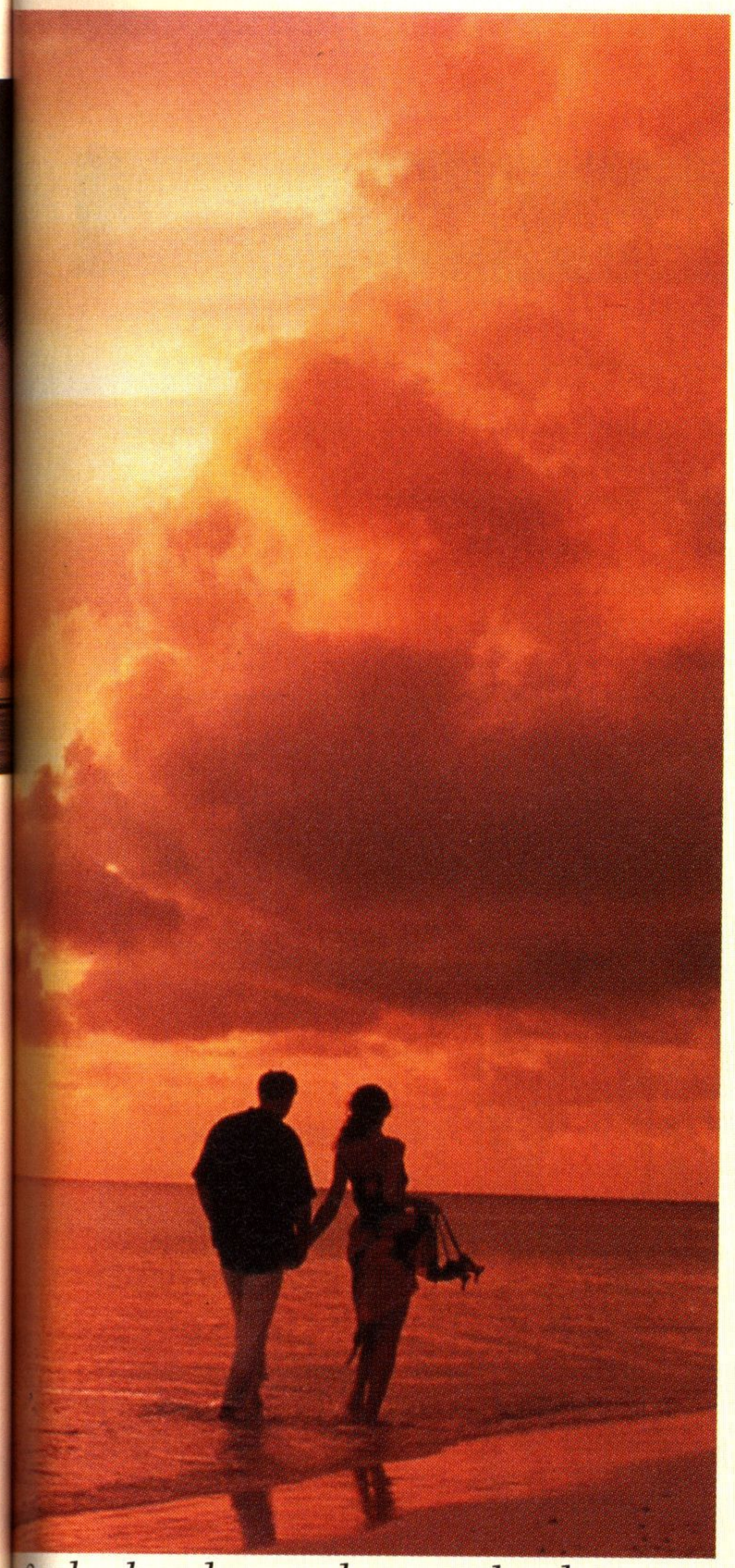
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A couple enjoy a romantic holiday (somewhere else).



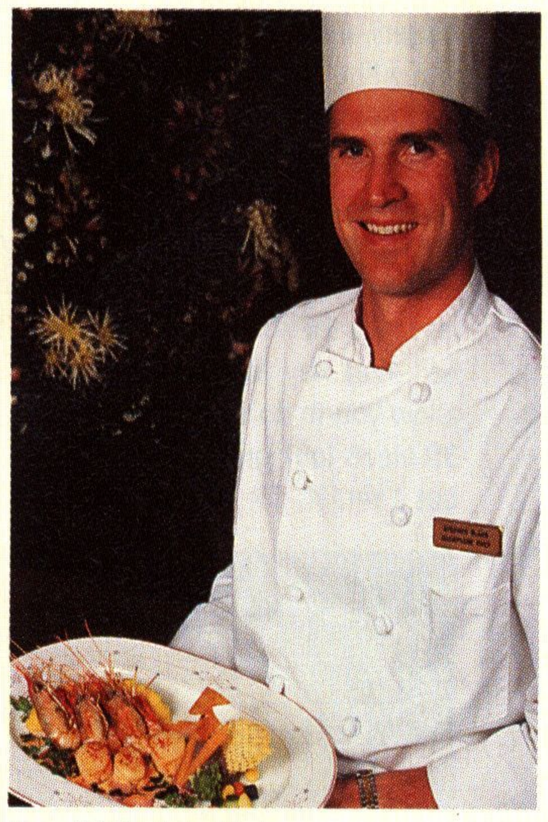
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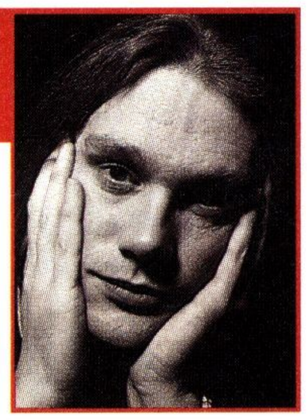
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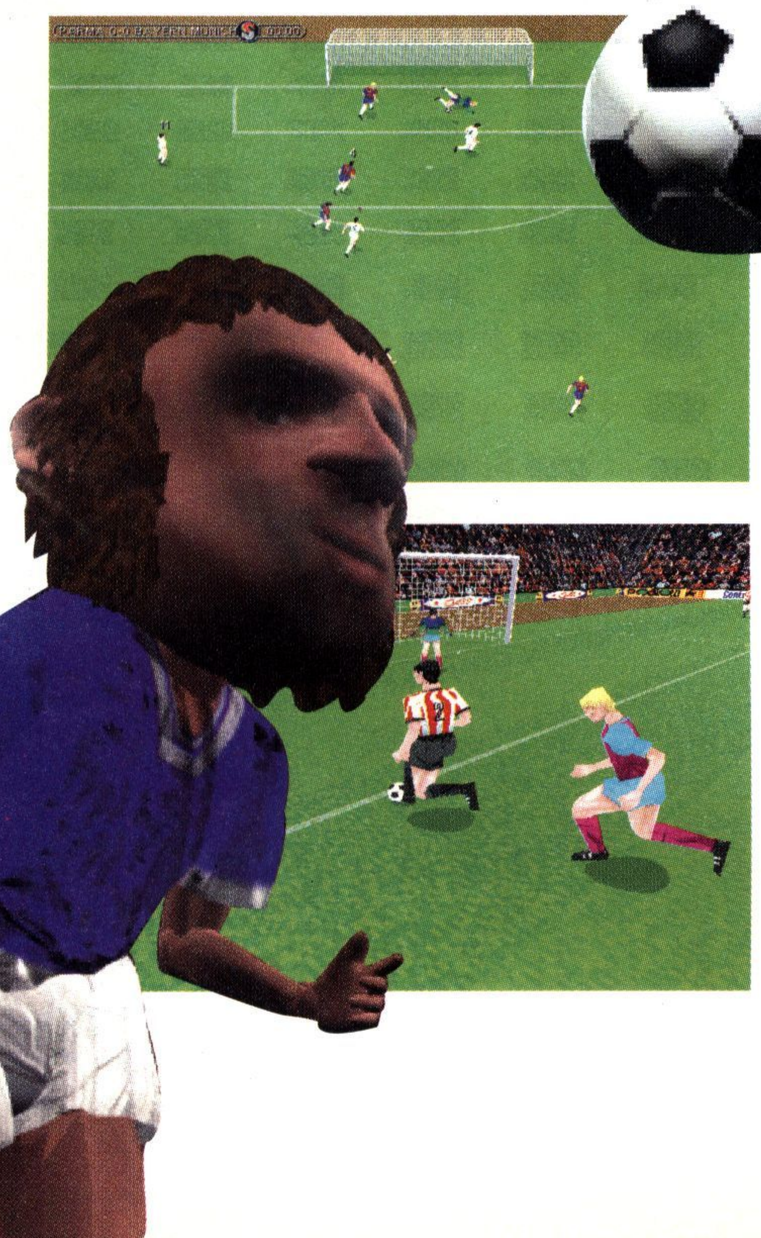
Review ZONE

This month



This month we finally get our hands on two of the most keenly-awaited sequels of two all-time classic games, namely* Sensible Soccer 2000 *and* Monkey Island 3. *Have they stood the test of time? Jeremy Wells is at the head of the retro pack.

FOOTBALL'S FINALLY COMING HOME TO THE PC. WE'VE WAITED AN AWFUL LONG time for the sequel to the seminal *Sensible Soccer* – and after what seems like years, it's finally arrived. Up until now, whenever we've had a footie game in the office, somebody, somewhere always says something along the lines of: "But it's not half as playable as *Sensi Soccer*." It may sport state-of-the-art graphics, motion captured players and a multitude of options, but if it ain't as playable as *Sensi*, then the verdict is usually one of lamenting disappointment. To be perfectly honest, when we heard that Sensible were working on a new 3D football game, we were a bit perturbed. So far, no one has managed to produce a 3D football game with the lasting playability of the original *Sensible Soccer*. Gremlin's *Actua Soccer* came close, and the forthcoming *Actua Soccer 2* looks very promising, but if you believe Sensi's Jon Hare, he'll tell you that the reason *Sensi Soccer* was so playable was largely down to the top-down perspective: "Football is all about timing – that's where the real skill comes from – knowing when to release the ball, make the pass and take the shot. You can only do that accurately when you can see further than a player can kick the ball, that way you can at least aim your passes and shots with some degree of accuracy. 3D views don't allow you to do that. You have to rely too much on player AI and that's when you start getting problems. 3D views look great, but to a certain extent you're playing blind. *Sensible Soccer 2000* is technically 3D, but it retains the top-down perspective to keep the playability. Basically, all we've done is tweak the gameplay and implement a new 3D engine to bring it up to date."



But are graphical make-overs and tweaks enough? Are classic games such as *Sensi Soccer* and *Monkey Island* robust enough to be brought up to date and compete with the likes of *Actua Soccer 2* and *Blade Runner*? If the reaction in the office is anything to go by, people know what they like and like what they know.

As soon as *Sensi Soccer 2000* came in, we immediately set up a league on the PC and it was just like old times. In reviewer Steve Hill's words, the feeling was akin to revisiting a house you've lived in that's been redecorated. Amaya is the biggest ever *Monkey Island* fan and says in her review that playing *The Curse Of Monkey Island* is like meeting up with an old friend: strangely familiar and yet different. It just goes to show that classic games will always be classic games. Let's hope that some of the new games released this Christmas will go down in gaming history as classics. Z

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Scoring system

90+ CLASSIC

The highest accolade a game can attain. Not only is it innovative and highly original, but it's extremely playable and has masses of long-term appeal. Games that receive the 'Classic' award should be seen as a benchmark with which to compare other games of the same genre.

80–89 RECOMMENDED

An excellent game that simply lacks that certain something to make it a gaming classic. It may not be necessarily highly original, but it contains some new ideas and variations that add to the genre that are well implemented. Well worth checking out.

70-79

If a game scores within this bracket it's good, but not good enough to be recommended. It's not exactly original and somebody's probably done it better already, but it's still playable all the same. Basically, it's worth shelling out for, especially if you're a big fan of the genre, but don't expect anything innovative. Whatever you do, don't discount games just because they don't quite hit the recommended mark!

50-69

Games that fall into this bracket are distinctly average and don't really offer anything new. There's nothing much wrong with these titles, but then there's nothing much to recommend them either. They're just average. Okay. Not bad. Alright. We've seen it all before. A lot better on budget. You get the picture.

40-49

Okay, so you're not really going to buy this, are you? We'd advise you not to. It's below average, it's not very playable, you'll probably be disappointed. It had a few nice ideas, but they were badly executed. Give it a miss.

21-39

Oh dear. This should never have got past the ideas stage. It offers absolutely nothing new to the genre, is very limited in terms of gameplay, frustrating to play and ultimately a complete waste of money. Avoid disappointment. Avoid this game.

20 AND BELOW PANTS

Absolutely bloody awful. Unplayable, due to bad design or bugged code. Crap with a capital 'C'. Naff with a capital 'N'. Do not buy this game, it will ruin your life and all those who come into contact with it. It doesn't get much worse than this. Have we made ourselves clear?

In Perspective

This is designed as a purely visual guide to how games of a similar style compare. The bars do not relate to previous review scores... they are simply an indication of how the reviewer feels about the products on a sliding scale.

Game 1

Game 2

ATI 3D
Native Version Available

3DBLASTER
Native Version Available

3DFX
Native Version Available

DIAMOND STEALTH
Native Version Available

MATROX MYSTIQUE
Native Version Available

POWERVR
Native Version Available

The software is designed to take advantage of **D3D**

The software is designed to take advantage of **MMX**

This software will only run under **WINDOWS 95**

The software may run slowly, especially in hi-res mode

The software supports **MICROSOFT DIRECTINPUT**

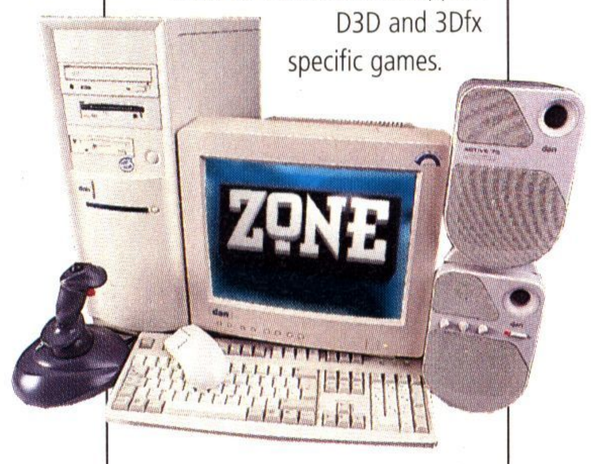
The software supports **MICROSOFT DIRECTPLAY**

The software supports **INTERNET PLAY**

The software will run acceptably on a **486DX2/66**

THE BENCHMARK PC

At ***PC Zone*** all games are played and tested on a **DAN Technology Pentium 133** with 16Mb RAM, a 2Mb graphics card and a quad-speed CD-ROM drive. We also use Maxi Gamer 3Dfx cards for releases that support D3D and 3Dfx specific games.



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THANKS THIS ISSUE TO:

Paul Fox & Sensible Software
Danielle, Nova, Laura & Sarah
The guys @ Shoot 'n' Surf
Jason @ MicroProse
Mike Harding
Dylan Isaacs
Lee Hyde
Andy Campbell @ Red Lemon
Jonathon @ Psygnosis
Steve McKevitt @ Gremlin

Cool games

We see hundreds of games over the months but there are a few that we hang on to and continue to play at lunch-time/when we're supposed to be doing more important stuff...



- Grand Theft Auto
- Sensi Soccer 2000
- ◀ Quake 2 Test
- Monkey Island 3
- Jedi Knight: Dark Forces II

Crap games

There are some games that you can leave in the middle of the room with a big sign next to them saying "Please steal me" and you still can't get rid of the bloody things...



- Star Wars Monopoly Edition
- ◀ Daytona USA Deluxe
- Postal
- Virus
- Corporate Warrior



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"Tomb Raider 2 takes the original by the scruff of the neck. Who'd have thought it could get better?"

Official PlayStation Magazine 10/10



PlayStation

PC CD

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Sensible Soccer

Steve Hill cordially announces his retirement from public life. It's a football thing.



TO THOSE WHO HAVE EVER SUCCUMBED to the addictive qualities of Sensible Soccer, the news that an all-new version is upon us, will be greeted with the same gusto as the rave community being informed of the invention of a new drug (called F): in other words, a mixture of joy and trepidation. Incidentally, those who haven't discovered the magic of Sensi either have no gaming heritage, possess the co-ordination of an elk, or simply don't like football (in which case they can leave right now).

A genuine classic; to the purist, *Sensi* has always been considered the ultimate football game. Numerous pretenders to the throne have come and gone, offering superfluous periphery and elaborate graphical trickery, all to little avail. Some of them provided a brief visceral thrill, but few were anything more than a minor distraction, none coming close to the intensity and instinctiveness of a full-on game of *Sensi*. Defiantly laughing in the face of supposedly more sophisticated games, *Sensi* is the ultimate example of the old gameplay over graphics argument, and is a game that is returned to time after time, its appeal scarcely eroded by time. To paraphrase intermittent Everton manager, Howard Kendall, other games were merely affairs, but *Sensible* was a marriage.

Ch-ch-ch-changes

So, *Sensible Soccer 2000*, what the bejesus is all that about? Many people fear change, this writer included, and messing with such a precious gaming cornerstone may be frowned upon in less progressive quarters. There will always be bluff old traditionalists who adhere to the time-honoured adage 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it.' They needn't worry. *Sensi* hasn't been 'fixed' as such, but simply been refined and modernised, incorporating an all new 3D engine and some additional features. Make no mistake, this is definitely a brand new game, *Sensi*'s update privileges having long since expired.

Long time fans will be relieved to learn that the overhead view has been maintained. This is a good thing. To play a football game, it is essential to be able to see where your players are, for the fairly straightforward reason that you need to pass the ball to them. This would appear obvious, although many developers of football games seem to think it more important that we are treated to a close-up of a sweaty footballer, more intent on showing off what they can do rather than thinking about why they are doing it. Yes, it's visually impressive, but as everyone is now used to the television, no computer graphic has ever quite managed to come close to matching the realism offered by John Logie Baird's godlike invention.

Frantic goalmouth scrambles are frequent, with plenty of opportunity for 'Gary Lineker' goals.

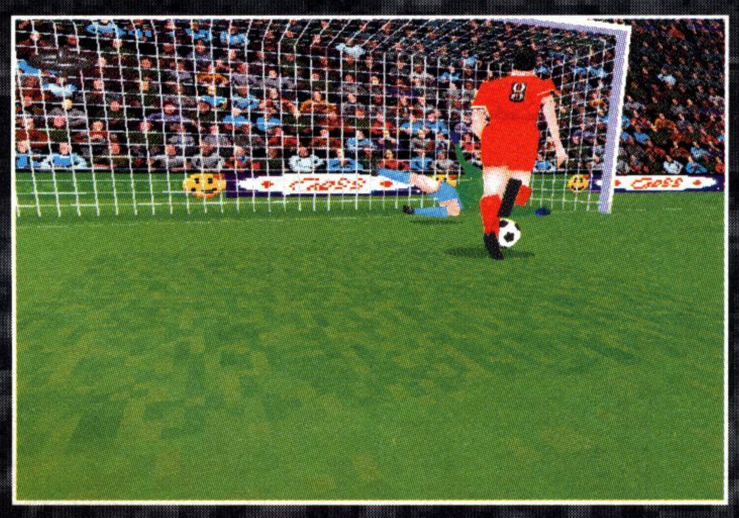
Score a goal

That's not to say that the graphics in *Sensi 2000* are by any means shabby, the player animations incorporate some 250 motion captured moves. It's just that in *Sensi 2000*, the graphics serve the purpose of the game, rather than the tail wagging the dog, as it were. They are functional, rather than flashy. Besides, the real eye candy is saved for the replays, with hi-res 3D graphics being used to relay goals from a choice selection of camera angles.

The menu screens have all been redesigned, but still maintain that muted, aesthetically pleasing style, with a reserved, almost BBC quality presentation. The incidental music is perfectly suited, being an ambient chill-out affair

An uncannily realistic scoreline, apart from the fact that Liverpool have scored a goal. The tits.

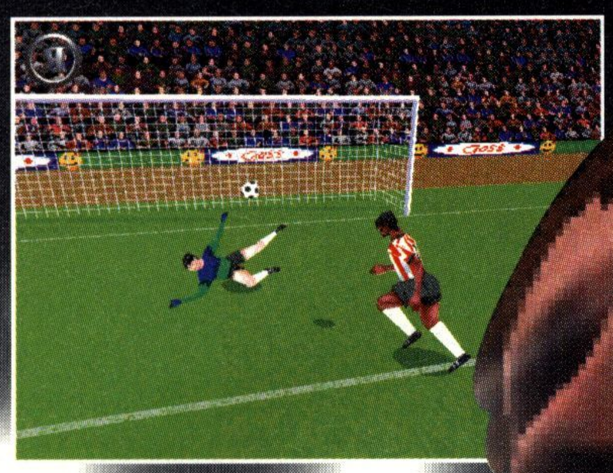






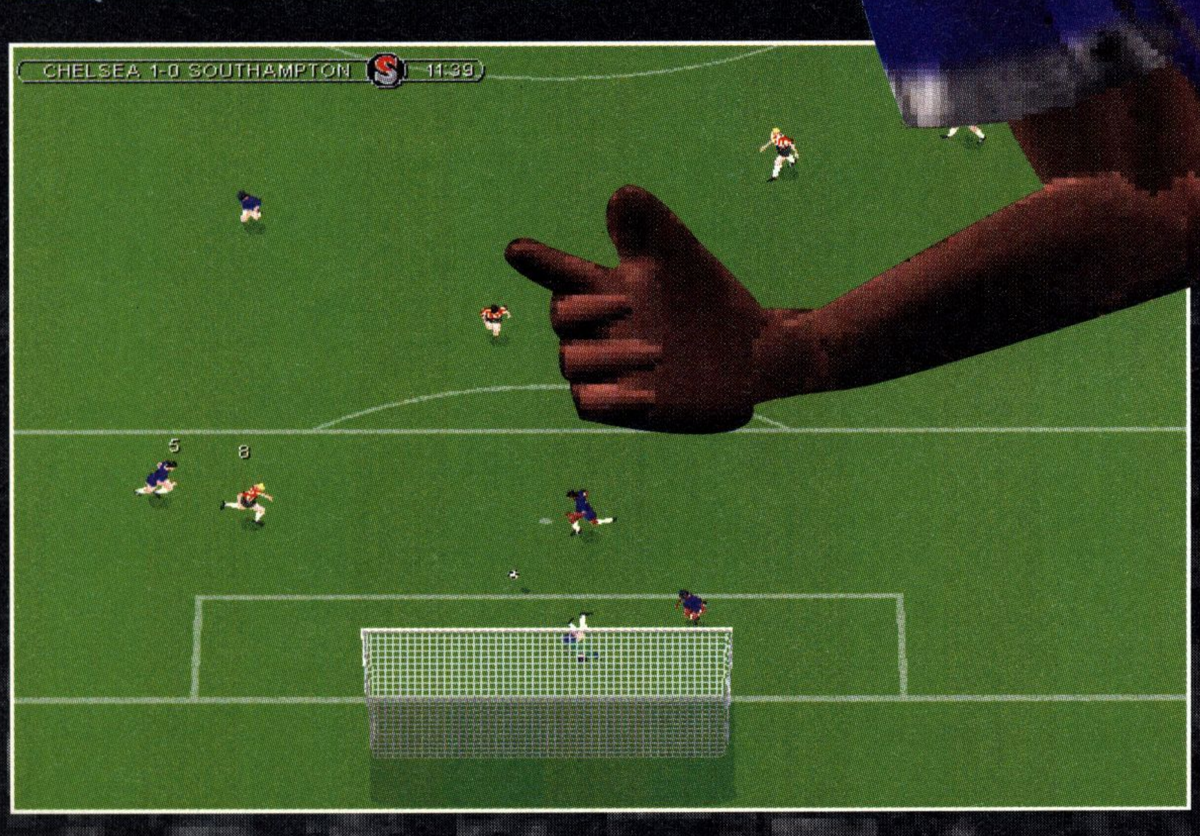
2000







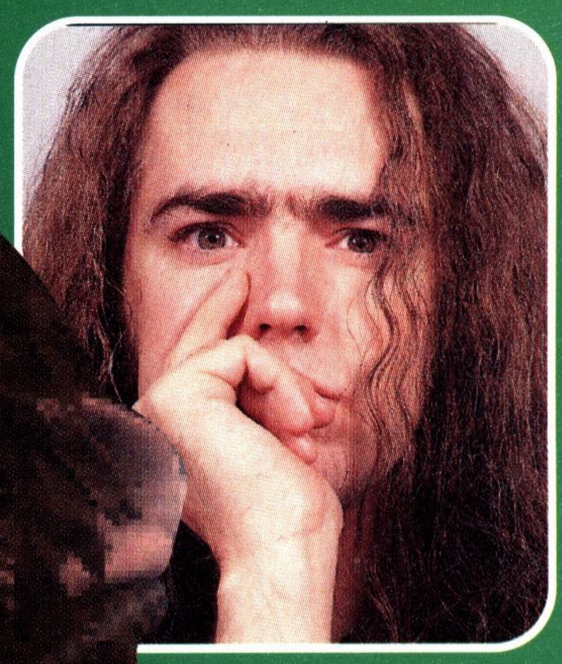




Captain Sensible

The driving force behind Sensible Software, and hence *Sensible Soccer 2000*, is Jon Hare, who is also featured elsewhere in this issue. As well as cracking the whip over the foul-mouthed Essex men that make up the Sensible team, he has a hands-on role, involved in virtually every aspect of the game. In addition to contributing to the music, Hare also found himself covered from head to toe in fluorescent ping-pong balls for some of the motion capture sequences, the tight all-over body suit demonstrating the vastness of his beer gut to some effect. Furthermore, he has recorded all of the commentary himself, at no less a venue than Pinewood Studios, performing a passable impression of the bastard son of Brian Moore and Barry Davies.

Such was Hare's dedication to the project that he even vowed not to shave off his sideburns until the game was completed, in much the same way that footballers in the midst of a cup run used to. Throughout the final weeks of the game, Hare went from Willie Rushton to Amos out of Emmerdale, sporting a set of lamb chops that would have graced the front window of Dewhursts.



Coach Potato





For those without the basic manual dexterity to work a two button joypad, *Sensible Soccer 2000* comes with a comprehensive coaching option, enabling you to set up your team in extreme detail. Each player is rated in terms of tackling, heading, passing, control, speed, shooting and finishing, and everyone in the team can be instructed to make best use of their skills. They can be told to tackle, run with it, attempt either an easy or tricky pass, hoof the ball or shoot. Team set-ups can be saved and when you're happy to play you can watch your naive tactics flounder, or reap the benefits of your genius.

◀ that almost smacks of an Eno collaboration, putting the player at ease as he dwells over his team tactics. The theme tune was mentioned last month, but is worthy of another plug, being a rousing anthem more akin to New Order's *World In Motion* than The Lightning Seeds' Euro 96 Wembley sing-along. The song comes replete with a typically madcap Sensible video, a snippet of which can be viewed exclusively on this month's coverdisc.

She's lost control

Last issue, in the otherwise excellent Blueprint, we said the new *Sensi 2000* will use three control buttons. This was lacking, what we in the trade, call facts, and those responsible for this heinous faux pas were dealt with swiftly and severely. The truth is that *S2K* will require two buttons, which is twice as many as before, although it hardly requires the memory of The Great Suprendo to operate. The primary 'A' button is the same as ever, a little tap passing the ball along the ground, and a bit more purchase giving it some air. When not in possession, the 'A' button performs a sliding tackle or, if mis-timed, a blatant foul. The 'B' button, on the other hand, takes its cue from *International Superstar Soccer*, giving the player some speed and performing a soft tackle instead of committing to a lunge. This is the only real difference in terms of gameplay, and within minutes of picking up a joypad, the old *Sensi* moves come flooding back.



The high resolution replay mode allows hideous defensive errors to be deliberated over in detail.

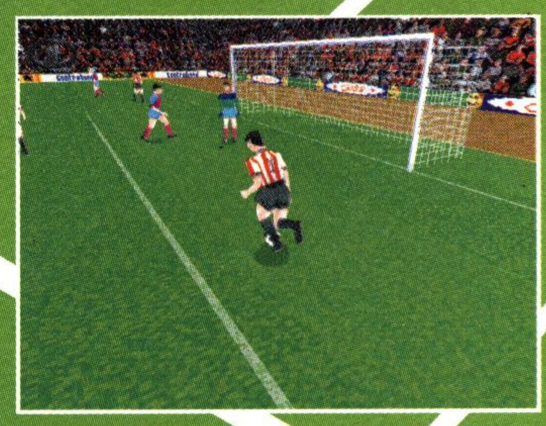
For the seasoned *Sensi* player, it's like being at home, but a home which has been extensively redecorated and modernised, the threadbare lino replaced with lush shagpile and the tatty posters removed in favour of some fancy art deco. Basically, *Sensible Soccer 2000* is good for all the reasons that *Sensible Soccer* was good. It makes you sweat, it makes you swear, and it can take days out of your life.

What's my name?

The attention to detail is of the immaculate level we have come to expect from Sensible, the 300 or so teams featuring real player names as well as authentic skin and hair colourings. For the solo player, there are enough competitions to keep it interesting, with options to compete in the premier divisions of England, Italy, Spain, France, Germany and Scotland (which shouldn't be too taxing). There are also three European club competitions to contend with, World Cup qualifiers, some special arcade challenges, and of course the option to create your own competitions. Where it really comes into its own is in the two player game, which really sorts the wheat from the chaff. Intense concentration is needed, and within the space of a few games, the condition known as Sensi thumb becomes apparent, whereby the thumb of your left hand becomes a gnarled stump from pressing too hard on the joypad.

Much like real football, you can go through spells of good

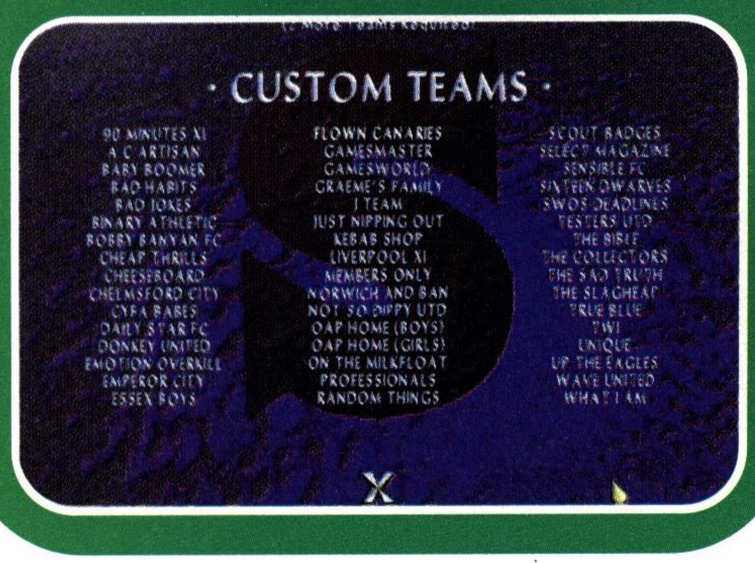




(Top) It's Sensible Soccer, but only more so.
(Above) Another fancy replay, with the keeper slightly out of position.

Custom made

A unique feature of previous incarnations of *Sensible Soccer* has been the custom teams, incorporating such bizarre sides as The Slagheap, Boring Things and Old Dears. The new version continues this trend, and one of the better teams is the *PC Zone* All Stars, particularly their stylish number eight, a tall, dark, skilful midfielder with an impressive turn of pace, an eye for goal and a huge stomach.



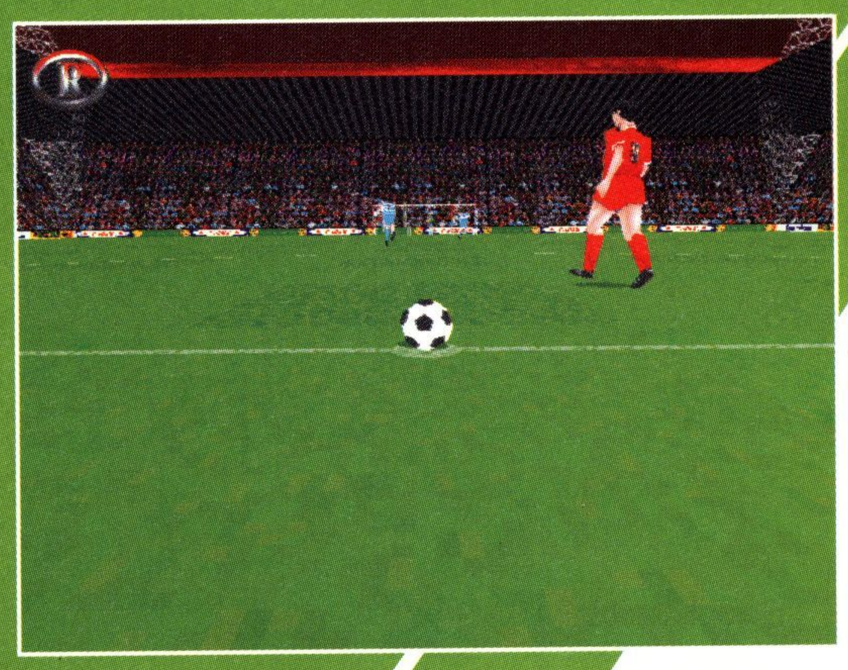


or bad form. You can think you're on top of your game, confidently taking on all-comers (the entire Sensible office for instance), but then some arse will come along and beat you, necessitating a total rethink. Also like real football, tactics play an important part. It is possible to play defensively, clinging on to a narrow lead. Rather than the ball being punted from end to end, tangible bouts of pressure become apparent, with teams camped in the opponents half for long periods. During particularly intense periods of play, it is possible to suffer from Sensi blindness, whereby the player temporarily loses control of his faculties.

For sure, like I say, at the end of the day it's all about putting the ball in the back of the net. If you don't score goals you don't win football matches.

Monkey tennis?

So, we like it, it's good. If this were a glib console magazine written by underpaid chimpanzees, we'd probably come up with the highly unoriginal phrase, 'The best just got better!!' replete with a number of superfluous exclamation marks. As it is, we're a vaguely sophisticated adult-oriented magazine (although a glance around the office would suggest otherwise) written by moderately paid professionals. So what we will say is that an excellent game has been brought up to date with improved graphics and some nifty new features, while still maintaining the playability that made its predecessor such a classic. Sensible should now get to work on *Sensible World Of Soccer 2000* then we can all go home. Z



Chris' opinion

Wary as I am of admitting this in print, I must confess I still have my Amiga 500 which I keep solely so I can play *Sensible Soccer*. The Amiga version has always been the definitive one in my opinion (the PC versions all run too fast) so obviously this is what I wanted to see rectified in *Sensi 2000*. As you can probably guess from Steve's review, Sensible Software seem to have solved this problem. They've also made sure the gameplay that made the original *Sensi* so addictive has remained intact, which was something of a relief for us all. With so many software houses concentrating on flashy 3D visuals rather than gameplay, it's nice to know Sensible Software haven't deserted us and they should be congratulated on producing what's currently the most playable football game on PC. Anyone want to buy an Amiga?

Jeremy's opinion

While everybody else has become obsessed with 3D, Sensible have stuck with the zoomed out, top down view that made the original game so playable. *SS2000* may still look a little antiquated when compared to the glorious *Actua Soccer*, but Sensible have managed to retain all the playability of the original and at the same time incorporate a few tweaks and implement an excellent tactical editor. In two-player mode it's extremely fun to play and one of the few football games in which you can actually defend as well as attack. The player selection is quick and accurate, and although you only have two buttons, you can actually pull off some stunning moves. So is *Sensible Soccer 2000* the best footie game ever? You'll have to wait until next month when we review the other two biggies *Actua Soccer* 2 and *Fifa: The Road To The World Cup*.

In Perspective

Sensible Soccer 2000 is essentialy a different type of game to the 3D graphical showpieces currently flooding the market, Not wishing to let that stand in our way though, we are going to compare it to them anyway. Obviously, none can compare to actually watching or playing the beautiful game itself. But *Sensi* runs it extremely close.

Sensible Soccer 2000

Sensible Soccer

Kick Off 98

FIFA 97

Actua Soccer

Real Football

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90 (P133 Recommended)

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Joypad, keyboard

Direct Input

Score

Football is our love.

90

Price: £39.99

Release date: December

Publisher: GT Interactive

Telephone: 0171 258 3791

Website: www.gtinteractive.co.uk

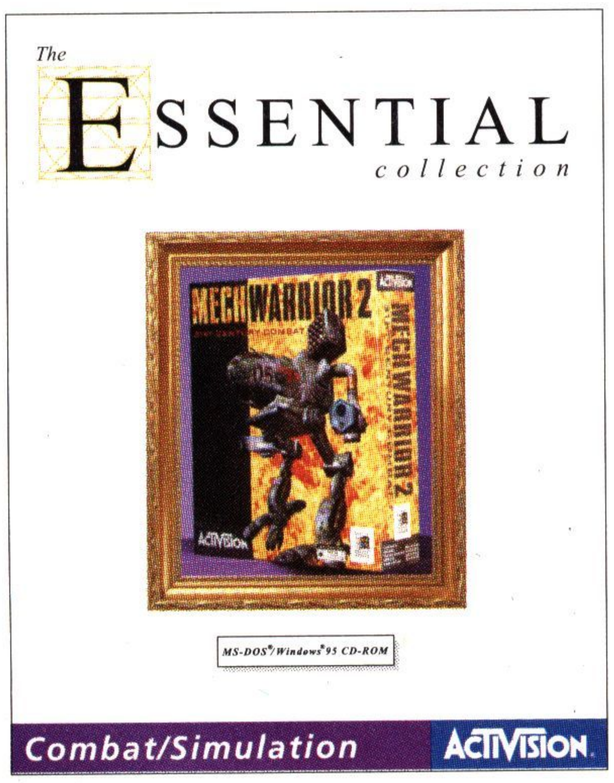
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Monkey Island

The Curse Of Monkey Island

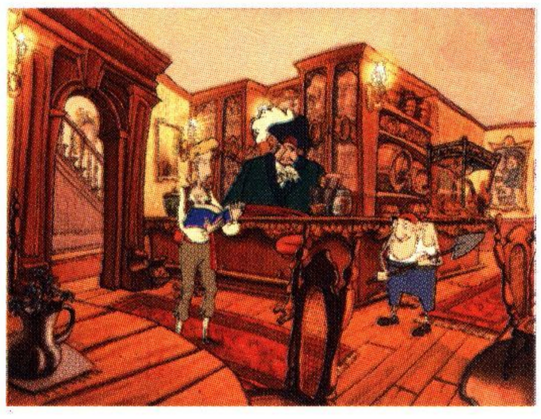




Amaya Lopez has waited five long lonely years for some more monkey business. But will it be as good as the last time, or indeed the first time? Or will she have to tell the game of her life to chuck off? We let her passions loose on the primate suspect.



IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT FIVE YEARS have gone by since the most wondrous adventure of all time appeared on game shelves, ready to woo and tempt all and sundry to a life of sparkling gameplay, ingenious puzzles and a hilarious dose of self-deprecating humour. Monkey Island 2 was an out and out winner, a triumph for LucasArts, a game worth getting married to. But then all went quiet on the simian front. Not a wimper. Not a cry. Not a peek. Not even a glimpse of pink bottom. The Monkey series was over, dead and buried, kaput – LucasArts concentrated instead on new escapades which didn't involve four-legged primates or drunken pirates, moving into the higher echelons of greasy, head-bangin' bikers and smart dog/rabbit detective duos. The latter was excellent (and merits a sequel), the former was ever-so-slightly snorey. But the clamouring for "more Monkey" would not subside, so the imminent birth of the third game in the series was announced... and the world rejoiced. Hoorah!





(Above bottom) Too busy faffing with his hair, Guybrush fails to realise LeChuck is in the ship behind him.

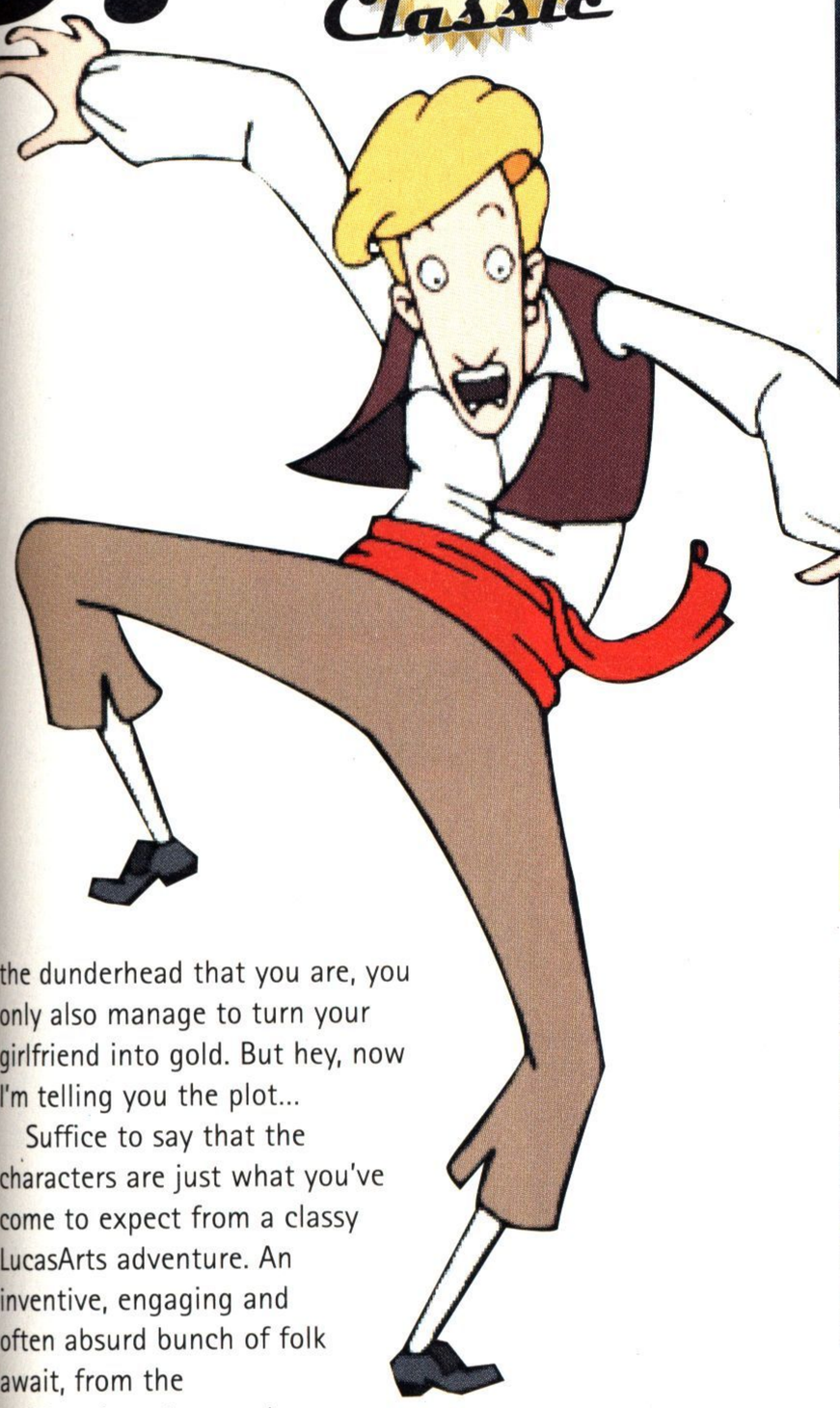
Wimps R Us

Well, *Monkey Island 3: The Curse Of Monkey Island* – has arrived. It stars all our favourite characters from the last game, as well as a collection of new ones. Guybrush Threepwood, the ponciest pirate in history takes his place once more as the unlikely hero in a new salty sea-dog adventure. His nemesis from the first game, the heinous ghost pirate LeChuck, is back and looking for action as well as a new bit of stuff. He's got his eye on Elaine Marley, a rich bitch if ever there was one, but – hey – sassy and sexy too, and the gal who's always held a place in LeChuck's villainous heart. LeChuck wants to make her his demon bride, despite the fact that Elaine, for all her obvious charms, is clearly insane – she loves none other than old wimpo features, Threepwood. This unbelievable fact comes to light during the highly impressive, beautifully animated intro sequence. That special brand of '*Monkey*' humour kicks in immediately...

Hapless Guybrush is sitting in a bumper car 'boat' in the middle of the ocean, dreaming of survival and all sorts of tasty food and drink. He begins to whine on about how he'd love a bottle of spring water, a tasty chicken, a pint of grog etc, and the aforementioned items begin bouncing along in line, while the gormless Guybrush, busy bemoaning his fate, fails to see them. He's suddenly startled from his dream, however, when his 'boat' is caught in the crossfire between two pirate ships. Aboard one hovers the unsavoury LeChuck, desperately declaring his love; on the other stands the feisty Elaine, looking suitably bored as she delivers some classic put-downs: "I'm washing my hair tonight" and "Can't we just be friends?" for example. Eventually, she gets mad with LeChuck, tells him how he took her away from her only true love – Guybrush (yeuch) – at which point LeChuck spots Guybrush and captures him. The game proper begins here, with you, as ponce pants, trying to break out of your ship's 'cell'. Not only do you meet up with Wally here – he of the giant bladder from the last game – but moments later, being

3:

PC ZONE Classic

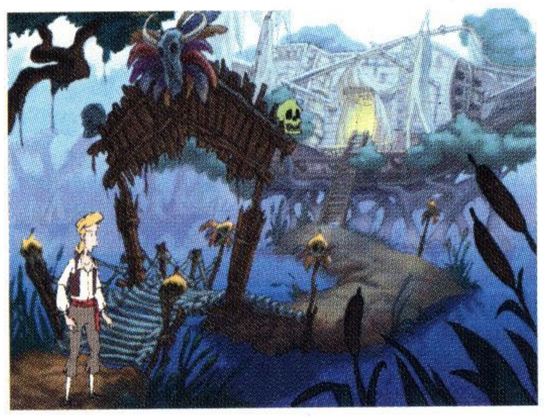


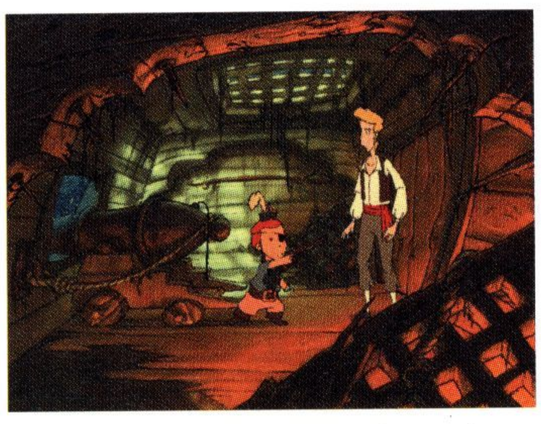


Hey, who needs Lara Croft when you've can have every pirate's pin-up – sexy, sassy Elaine Marley?

the dunderhead that you are, you only also manage to turn your girlfriend into gold. But hey, now I'm telling you the plot...

Suffice to say that the characters are just what you've come to expect from a classy LucasArts adventure. An inventive, engaging and often absurd bunch of folk await, from the hairdressing pirates who work at the Barbery Coast Salon, to the luvvy pirates in the theatre to the terrifying new tyrant, El Pollo Diablo (the Devil Chicken). The new characters are every bit as enticing as the old, and their voices work a treat. Not only is there a great range of accents – from hicksville redneck to tossy toff – but the lines are all delivered with gusto, which really makes it feel like you're witnessing a play. The attention to detail is brilliant: the game's packed with puns, self-mocking irony, witty dialogue and anachronistic repartee.



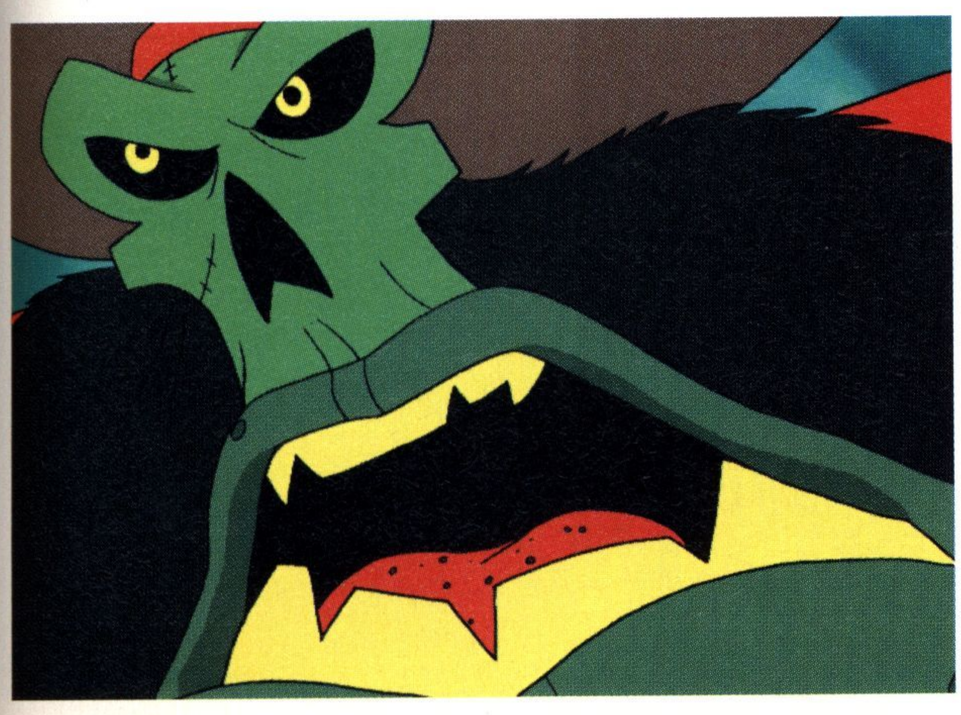


Ch-ch-ch-Changes

The biggest changes from *Monkey Island 2* lie in the graphics and the interface. Out go the slightly primitive but ultimately endearing rough-edged graphics and in comes a smooth swish style of animation worthy of Disney. Lush. Big. Meaty. Juicy. But somehow I can't help feeling that for *Monkey* devotees of the first two titles something tiny and almost intangible has been lost – rather like in that ridiculous episode of *Dallas* when the new Miss Ely appeared or when *Brookside* suddenly got a new Leo Johnson. The new characters are so much more polished than the old that they're almost unrecognisable. And I'm not too enamoured with the cartoony style the characters are drawn in; they're a bit too *Dragon's Lair* for my liking. Okay, so that's my own personal gripe, but I'm disappointed with Guybrush and LeChuck in particular – it's almost as if a weighty wodge of personality has been drained from their faces. Call me old-fashioned. Call me nostalgic. Call me old even (and I'll smash your face in) – but then I've always been a bit of a retro chick.

As for the interface, it plays like a dream. Easy to get the knack of, it's based on the one used in the last two LucasArts' ▶

(Below left) Ghost pirate LeChuck in all his grisly fully animated, halitosis-ridden glory.
(Below right) As his men beaver away on the pirate ship, Guybrush wonders where he put his nail file.







"Out go the slightly primitive graphics and in comes a smooth swish style worthy of Disney."

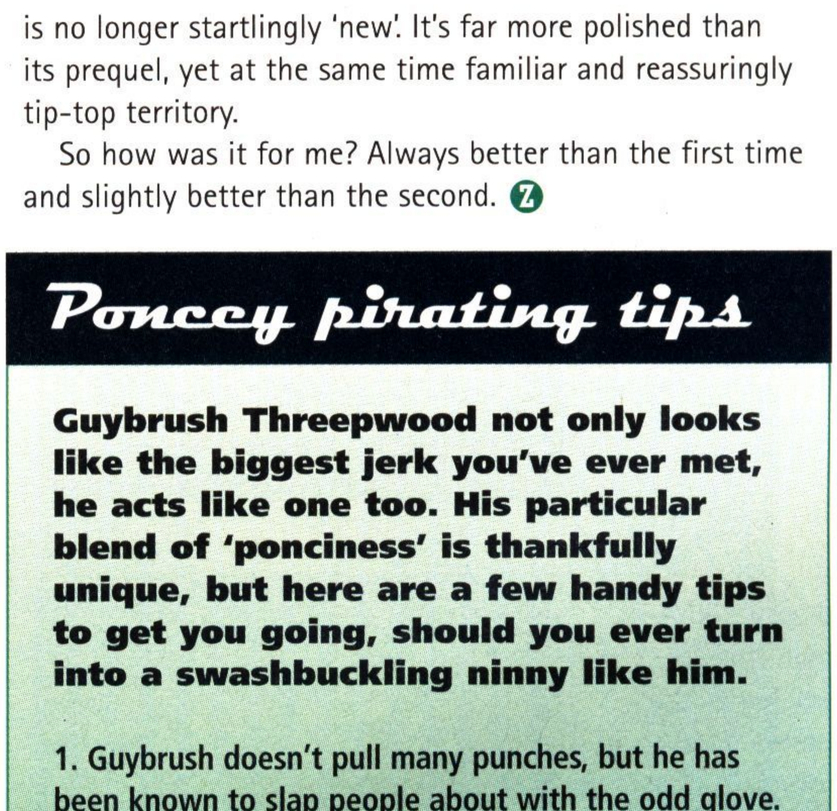
adventures, *The Dig* and *Full Throttle*. No tedious typing of text as in ye olde adventures of yore is required, instead it works by holding down the left mouse button to call up a large gold coin, which sports a fetching picture of a hand, a skull and a parrot's head. The hand stands for 'pick up' or 'use', the skull means 'examine' and the head stands for 'talk to', 'eat' or anything else you care to do using your mouth *(Cheeky – Ed)*. Your inventory is displayed in what seems like an ever-expanding case – one click with the right mouse button and it appears, then you can either left-click on it and drag it onto the 'scene' or decide to give it a command within the case using the gold coin or drag it over to combine it with another object in your inventory. When you talk to other characters, just like in the last game, a choice of questions and answers appear and you simply click on the ones you desire. Oh, and although this is a 'talkie', there's a Luddite option which allows you to view the text on screen too.

Mega Monkey

Another bonus is the fact *Monkey 3* is huge and – like *Monkey 2* – you get two games for the price of one. Even I, the highly revered Queen of *Monkey Island*, who was too proud to play the easier version and plumped straight for the Mega Monkey setting, found a fair few stumbling blocks along the way. But the beauty of this title, just like the other games in the series, is that the difficulty level is set just right. You never get so frustrated that you don't want to carry on, that you want to lob your PC through the nearest window, that you don't give a damn whether, say, bum-scratching Blondebeard ever eats a piece of real chicken again. It's such a cutie wootie, comforting game. It's where you've been before. You know it. You love it. It's warm. It's snug. There's nothing earth-shatteringly new gameplay-wise, yet it's impossible to put down. The jingly-jangly music that has you jigging from side to side like there's no tomorrow, the superb sound effects, the quick wit, the bad jokes, the self-mocking humour, the fantastic attention to detail, the cleverly crafted cut-scenes, the fun arcadey bits, the ingenious yet peculiarly logical puzzles – they're all here again.

Essentially, then, *The Curse Of Monkey Island* offers more of the same. That's no bad thing because there are still mad fools out there who've never laid their eyes on *Monkey 2*, but of course to us old ape hands, *Monkey 3* is no longer startlingly 'new'. It's far more polished than its prequel, yet at the same time familiar and reassuringly tip-top territory.

So how was it for me? Always better than the first time and slightly better than the second. Z



Even a gentlemen's duel with the 'Errol Flynn' of the pirate world proves too much for El Wimpo Guybrush.



Would you believe it, even the local mutt looks cooler than Guybrush – and he's barely alive.

Poncey pirating tips

Guybrush Threepwood not only looks like the biggest jerk you've ever met, he acts like one too. His particular blend of 'ponciness' is thankfully unique, but here are a few handy tips to get you going, should you ever turn into a swashbuckling ninny like him.

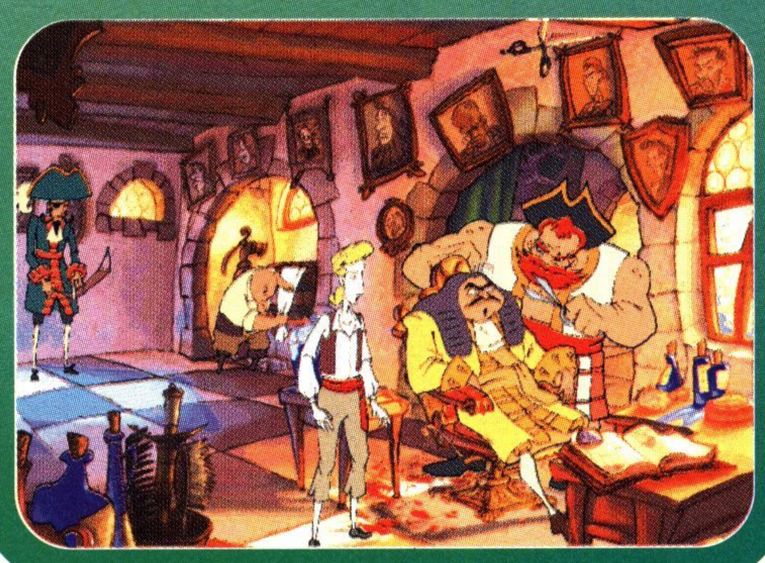
1. Guybrush doesn't pull many punches, but he has been known to slap people about with the odd glove.

2. He may look meek, but Guybrush's favourite film clip is the duelling banjo scene in *Deliverance*.

3. Guybrush also isn't the slightest bit averse to giving other people lice.

4. His tales about escaping from snakes are legendary – especially the one about the flowery syrup.

5. Guybrush is renowned for his gannet-like weakness for grub – he'll even eat biscuits with maggots in.



In Perspective

Monkey 3's closest rivals are its fab predecessor, *Monkey Island 2*, and the superb *Indiana Jones & The Fate Of Atlantis*. As regards the more recent graphic outings from the LucasArts stable, *The Dig* was ultimately disappointing and *Full Throttle's* gameplay was too short-lived. None of these niggles plague *Monkey 3*.

The Curse Of Monkey Island

Monkey Island 2

Full Throttle

The Dig

Indiana Jones & The Fate Of Atlantis

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb
Processor: P90
Graphics: SVGA
Sound: All major sound cards
Controls: Mouse

Win 95 Only!

Score

The kind of monkey business you'll be wanting more of.

92

Price: £39.99
Release date: Late November
Publisher: LucasArts/Virgin
Telephone: 0171 368 2255
Website: www.lucasarts.com

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... the impetuous might never return"



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Turok: Dinosaur Hunter



Suddenly, from the depths of the tunnel leapt miniature versions of himself. Most were holding high-powered torches, but unfortunately Gervaise had come in his Stainless Steel Ball outfit. Again.

Patrick McCarthy once went berserk with a ball-bearing gun in an old people's home. Naturally, he was at the head of the queue for the chance to blow away a few more ancient life-forms.

THE PLOT: YOU ARE THE TUROK, THE first-born son of the Fireseed family, Native American community police of The Lost Land. The Lost Land is an inter-dimensional sewer, where every kind of scum hang out. Think Braintree on a Friday night. People from the future rub shoulders with lumbering dinosaurs and everyone has guns. Arch-villain – The Campaigner – has worked on the said dinosaurs with a hammer, chisel and some bionic parts to make them very unfriendly. His plan is to lead them in war against the universe. It's up to you to try and mix it up with him and his evil minions.



As soon as the DJ put *You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)* on, even the dinosaurs started strutting their stuff.

My Gahd! It's huge

So, it's another first-person shoot 'em up. And I must admit I wasn't overly enamoured with it at first. As I played it more though, I got more and more into it. And now I love it. (Which is probably why I've given it a good score).

Alright, the graphics, even with a 3Dfx card, aren't gob-smacking compared to most these days. Some of the detail even looks a little scant in places. But this becomes understandable when you realise the size of the levels you have to fight through. They're bloody enormous. There are mountains with sheer cliffs, primeval forests, steaming jungles and the interiors of ancient ruins. Some of the sheer faces are climbable, there are areas to swim through – it's sort of like a first-person-viewed *Tomb Raider*. In fact, think of it as the lovechild of that, *Quake*, *Duke*, and the old wander-about-and-survive-em-up, *Robinson's Requiem*.

The weapons are cool, varied, nicely-animated and will bring a flush to the cheeks of devastation lovers everywhere. You start with a poxy knife and bow-and-arrows. The arrows soon become explosives-tipped however and soon you're picking up better and better weapons, from shotguns and grenade launchers to something that's like setting off a nuclear explosion in a halogen distributor's warehouse.

I think I've fouled my breeches

And there are some seriously scary bastards to fight. Each level is chocka with savage dinosaurs and artillery-equipped cyborgs. Once you've had your first few encounters, the dull thud of dinosaur feet will soon start to set the adrenaline flowing (if not the bowels). It's bad enough when they're au naturel, but when you start coming up against the tooled-up mutant dinos, with all sorts of death-dealing mega-weapons mounted on them, things start to get very hectic. The alien infantry types even zig-zag when they run towards you. Overall, the animation is superb. And unlike many games of this type, it's a good one-player game (which is good, considering there's no multi-player option). The huge levels with their exploration elements, varied backgrounds and hugely destructive weapons combine to make this one of the better and more entertaining games around at the moment. It's also one of the very few games to make you scared while you're playing (well, a little bit). Z

In Perspective

It's not as different from *Quake* as the developers would have us believe. Their 'open-ended' claims are optimistic: you still have to get keys for certain doors to get to the next area, etc. They cheat a bit with the graphics too – background objects appear out of mist, or darkness. But it's forgivable, when you consider the size of the levels and the fact it provides a genuinely absorbing experience.

Quake

Hexen 2

Turok

Tech Specs

Memory: 8Mb (16 recommended)

Processor: P100

Graphics: 3D accelerator required

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse, keyboard

Score

One of the better *Quake*-a-likes. And claustrophobics will appreciate the fact that it's mostly outdoors, too.

90

Price: £39.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Acclaim

Telephone: 0171 344 5000

Website: www.acclaimnation.com

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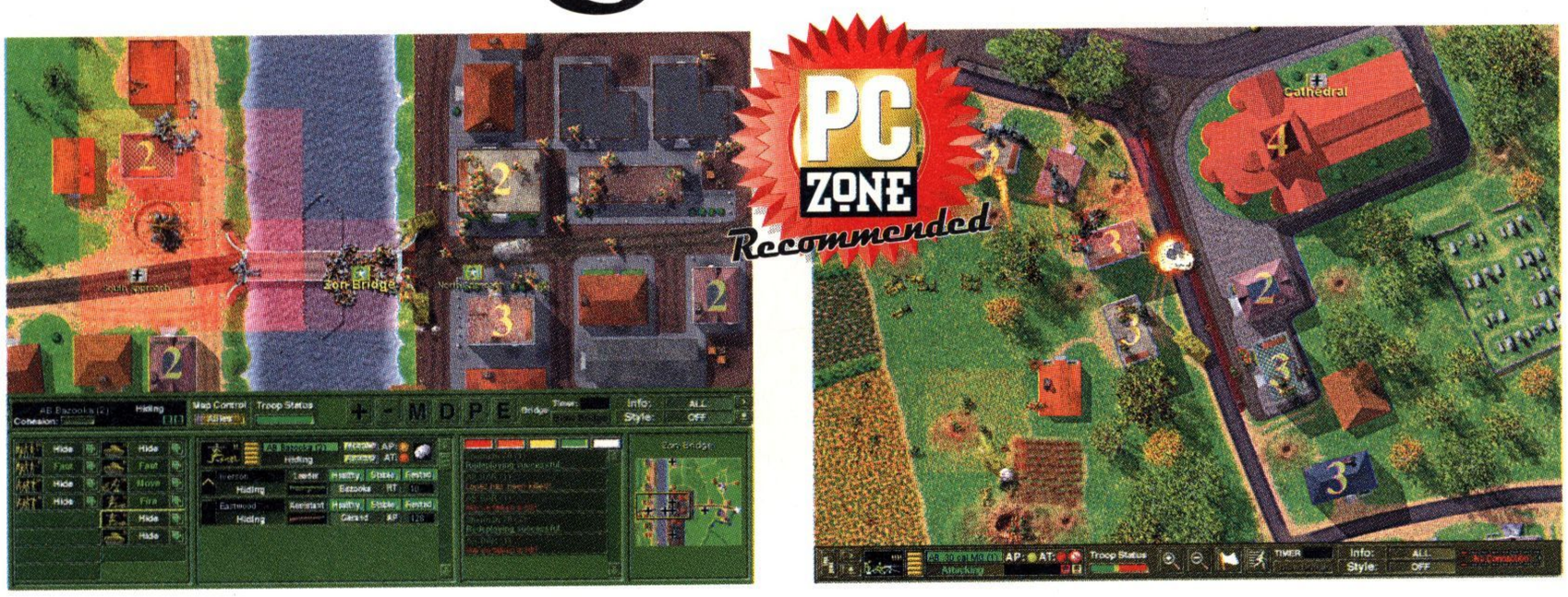
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Close Combat 2: A Bridge Too Far



Dave Mathieson likes nothing more than to settle into his rocking chair on a Sunday afternoon clutching a packet of Werther's Originals and his trusty pipe, while watching cheesy war films. Microsoft have just the thing to breath some life into his tired old bones...

TOP-DOWN STRATEGY GAMES USUALLY fit one of two categories – real-time futuristic efforts like Command & Conquer, and historical hex-based games set during some war that's actually happened. Hex games might be hot on accuracy, but when it comes to thrills per minute, they're decidedly lukewarm, more closely resembling board games than your average PC blast-fest. The problem is that there are plenty of people out there who like their realism, as anyone who's witnessed flight sim enthusiasts discussing the flying characteristics of Luftwaffe planes on the Internet will testify.

A Bridge Too Far is a bit of a corker, as it seamlessly merges anorak-friendly realism with real-time hecticness of a 'proper' game. Set during the end of the Second World War, *ABTF* is based around Operation Market Garden, when the Allies tried to speed things up a bit by trying to establish a bridgehead on the Rhine in Holland.

The action is divided up into lots of individual battles in which you can play as either the Allies or the Germans, each one in a beautifully drawn landscape consisting of towns, villages and fields. Unlike its predecessor, *Close Combat*, the scenery in *ABTF* doesn't look like it's been made up of tiles, and roads and rivers curve realistically in different directions. The soldiers are tiny but superbly animated little fellas, and they crawl, run, take cover, and get blown up very convincingly.

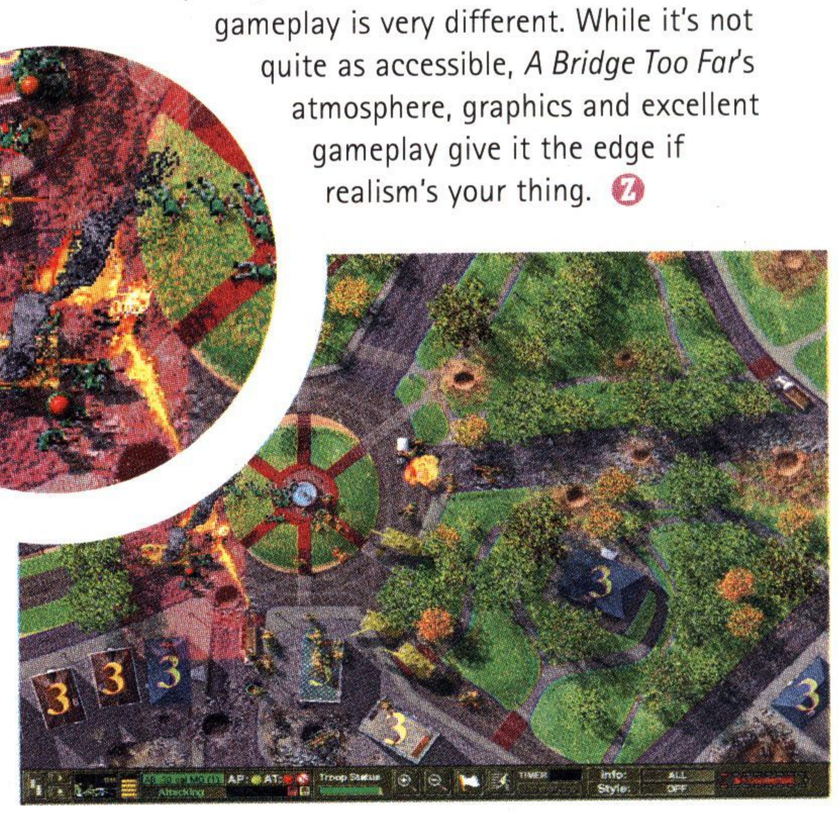
The interface is easy to use, and the main game screen is controlled by clicking on units and selecting orders from a drop-down menu. At the bottom of the screen there's a big status screen with information on each unit, and each soldier in that unit. Having a big monitor is definitely a bonus here as at higher resolutions you can obviously fit more on the screen.

Your forces are divided up into different units, and you give orders to the unit as a whole. The way these orders are carried out depends on how sensible the commands are, and the game's AI means that the la-di-da Gunner Grahams among your men can't be persuaded to take out machine-gun nests on their own. It's pretty hard to compare the AI of two different games, but I reckon that the boys in *ABTF* could have a group of NOD troops from *Command & Conquer* any day.

The sound effects are superb, and the scenery is constantly updated so that by the end of a battle that nice picturesque Dutch village is covered in shell craters, wrecked houses and little bloody corpses.

Different attention spans are nicely catered for, and there are three ways of playing the game – individual battles, operations in a particular area or the whole campaign. There are plenty of difficulty settings, but even with everything on 'easy' the war won't be over by Xmas.

Comparing *ABTF* with *C&C* is a little unfair, as the gameplay is very different. While it's not quite as accessible, *A Bridge Too Far*'s atmosphere, graphics and excellent gameplay give it the edge if realism's your thing. Z



In the good old days, our boys didn't need lager to go on the rampage in Europe. Just tanks and flamethrowers.

In Perspective

Close Combat 2: A Bridge Too Far skilfully succeeds in combining the very best action elements of *Command & Conquer* with the historical realism of hex-based games such as *Panzer General*. In addition there are also plenty of quality improvements that have been made over the previous version of *Close Combat*, and it rightly deserves a higher mark as a consequence.

C&C: Red Alert

Panzer General 2

Close Combat 2

Close Combat

Sid Meier's Gettysburg

Eastern Front

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

Win 95 Only! Network Play Internet Play

Score

Top WWII strategy action.

88

Price: £39.99

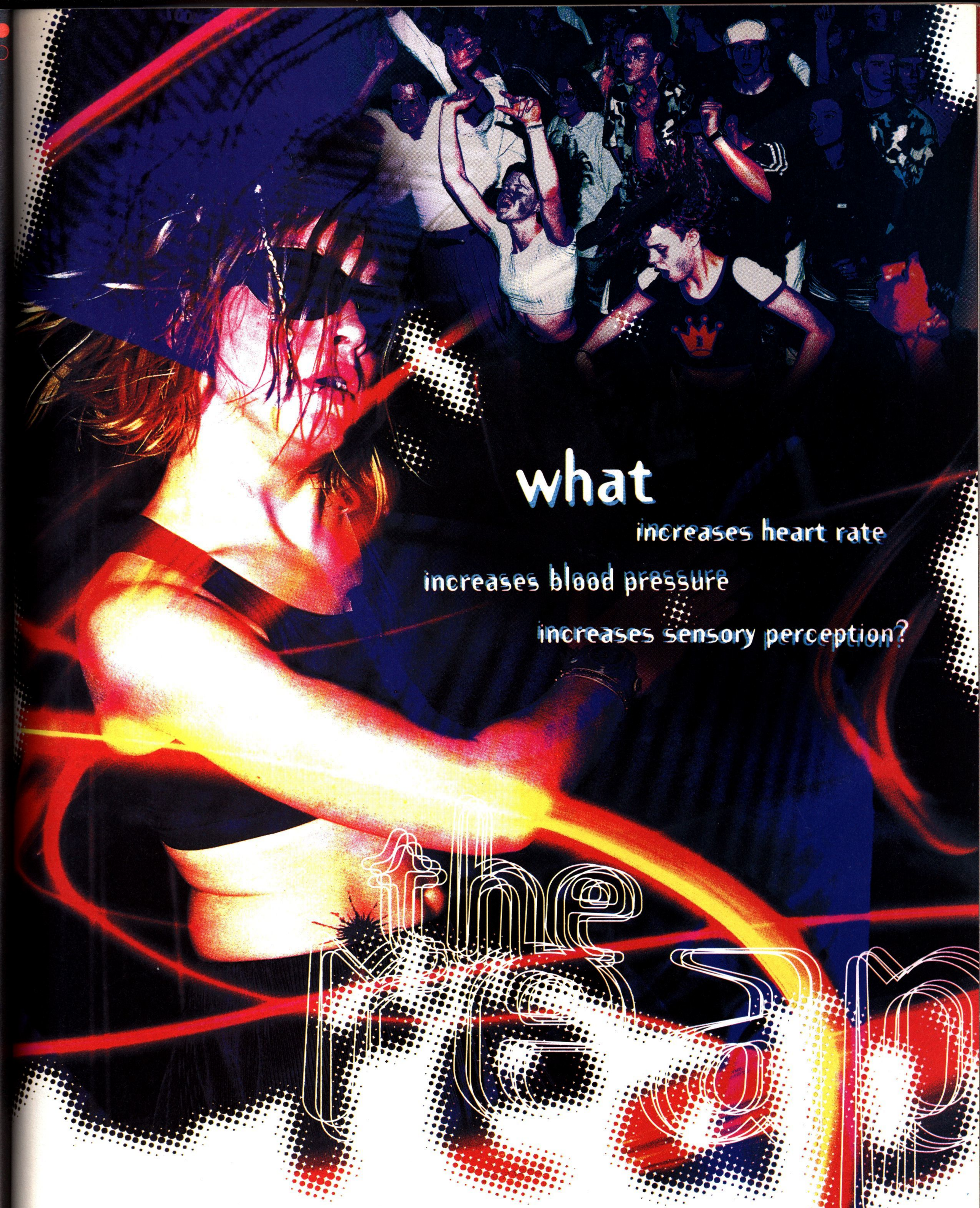
Release date: Out now

Publisher: Microsoft

Telephone: 0345 002000

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Blade Runner

PC ZONE Recommended

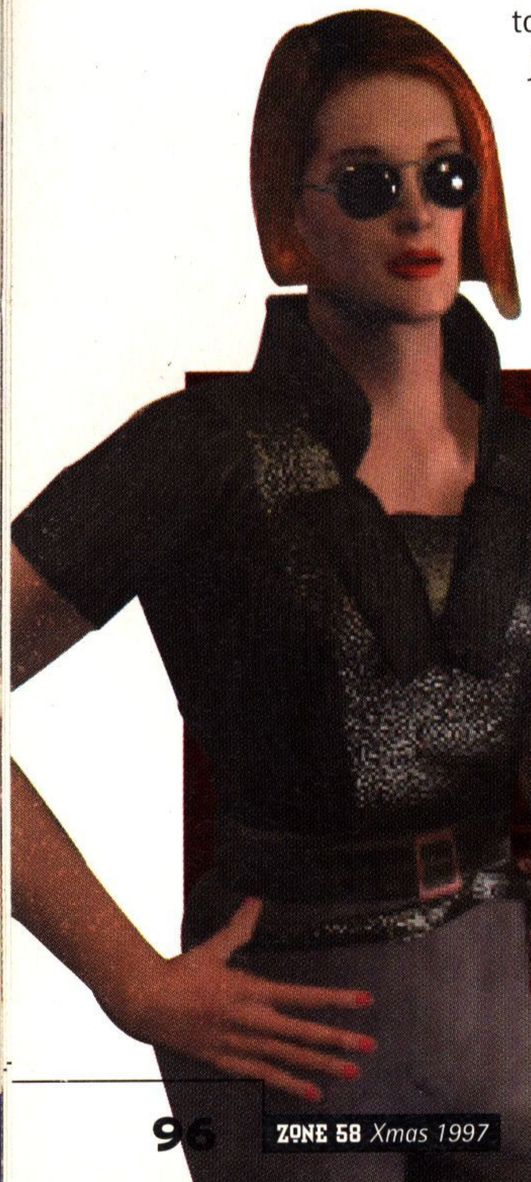




Paul Presley has seen many things you people wouldn't believe. The state of his bathroom for one.

SEEING ME PLAY BLADE RUNNER, ZONE'S Publisher, John, spoke for a nation: "Is it good? Please tell me it's good." There hasn't been a more eagerly-awaited adventure game in this office since, well Monkey Island 3. But before LucasArts' second-sequel there hadn't been a more sought after adventure since Star Trek TNG: A Final Unity, and that's two years ago.

Blade Runner is Westwood Studios' attempt to recreate the science fiction film noir classic on the small screen. The story isn't that of the film's, but a 'concurrent' tale concerning a different Runner; McCoy, and his hunt for a gang of killer replicants. The twist here being that there isn't one set solution to the game. Each time you start playing, the computer randomly picks which of the characters are going to be 'skin jobs' and which are just honest-joe, plain vanilla human beings. In total there are thirteen different endings to the game. Which I think is some kind of record. Quick, call Norris McWhirter.



"Blade Runner is quite the atmospheric marvel. All of the film's essential ingredients are in there."

Wake up, time to review

Before we go anywhere, let me acknowledge one particular fact straight away. Yes, the lighting is excellent. Absolutely excellent. No finer lighting have I ever seen in an adventure game. If there were such a thing as an awards ceremony for Best Lighting In A Computer Game Adaptation, *Blade Runner* would certainly be the front-runner in a very small list of nominees (I won't say it would win because these things are always so political that you just can't tell).

With that out of the way I should also say that the graphics on the whole are also first-rate. I say on the whole, because despite the scenery and FMV being beyond reproach (as a matter of fact, the FMV is some of the finest I've ever seen in an adventure), the actual game characters are somewhat less than pleasing. Very blocky, especially close-up. The reason given for this is that the sprites need to be scalable as they walk around the locations. They need to be able to get larger as they come fore and smaller as they go aft. All well and good and a very noble thought, trouble is, it doesn't make them look all that good. Technological advancement is a wondrous thing for sure, but that doesn't mean it always works. The Sinclair C5 anyone?

Apart from this one area, *Blade Runner* is quite an atmospheric marvel. All of the film's essential ingredients are there – the flying cars, the oppressive rain, the neon-drenched locales, etc. However, despite this, I would draw

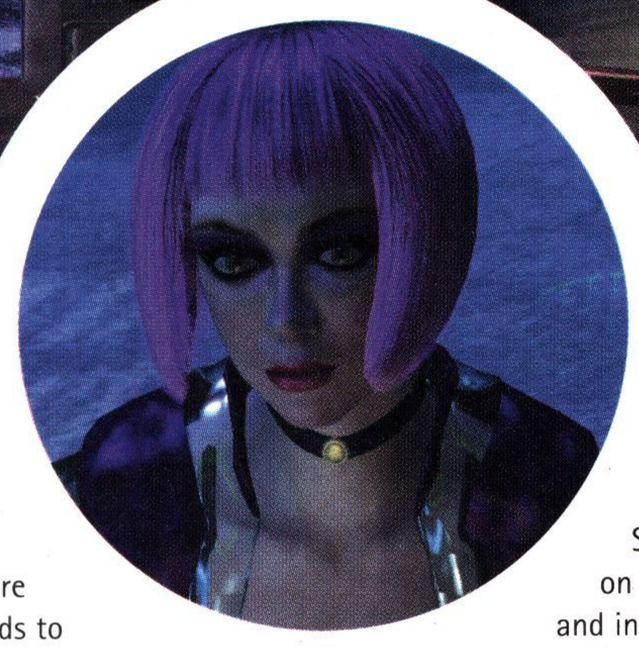




(Above) "Your partner hangs a picture of a nude woman on the wall. What do you do?", "I jack-off furiously." "OK, you're human."







(Above left) I know it's unrealistic, you know it is, even Westwood know it's unrealistic. But it's in the film and so it's in the game.

attention to the music. I'm not convinced it's been used as well as it could. Certainly there are a lot of the familiar Vangelis tracks in there, but they don't occur with enough frequency or in the right places to really help induce that classic *Blade Runner* feel. Consequently the atmosphere loses some of the dramatic punch it needs to keep you hooked. In reality this means the difference between enjoying the almost poetic mood of the film and the sanitised feel of a *Blade Runner* TV series. The elements are there but the 'magic' is missing.

"If I want atmosphere, I'll rent the movie..."

But the game. What's that like? Well once again the player is annoyingly limited to just the one form of input. Ever since someone in the Office Of Fair Adventuring Design issued the decree that player interfaces should be as simplistic as possible, adventure games have never recovered. Part of the sheer enjoyment of the old LucasArts and text-input games was that the player could try all sorts of different actions to get a result. He really felt as though he was working things out for himself. These days all you can do is click on something and the game works it all out for you. The only challenge comes in being patient enough to click on all the hotspots available. There isn't even a Look/Examine option – a staple ingredient for all adventure games since the beginning of time.

In its defence, *Blade Runner* does provide some challenge in the area of working out what's going on in the story. The ESPER photo-enhancement machine is a nice touch and is a good way of hiding clues for the player to discover (and I'm not going to criticise it for being unrealistic. The film was too, so Westwood are just being faithful). The clue database is also a helpful feature and let's the designers hide clues in plain sight, as it were.

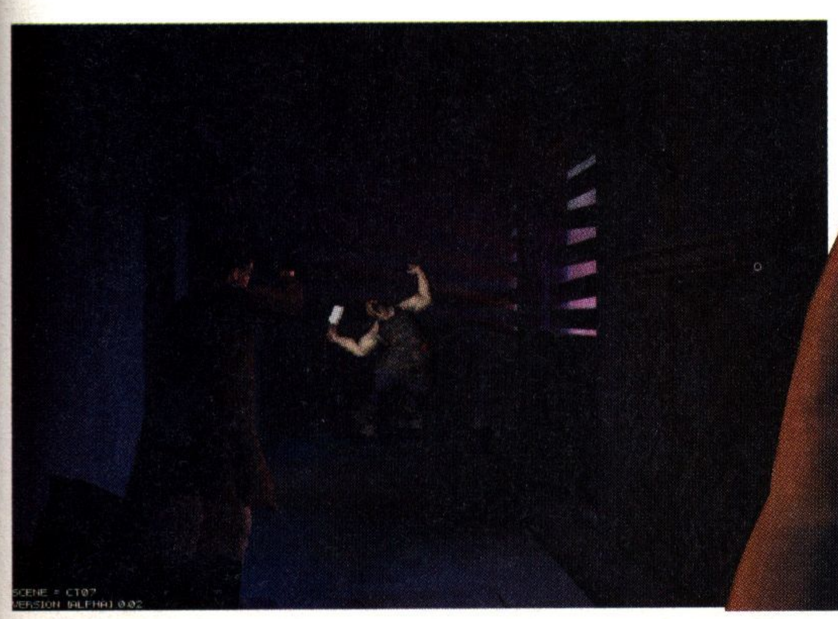
The reviewer's cut

So do I like it or not? Yes, I'd say that on the whole, I do. The story is strong and intelligent enough to compensate for the problems I have with the technical side of the game and while I'd argue that the challenge could have been a lot higher, it's by no means an easy game and the urge to keep playing is there. The multiple ending factor also helps.

The *Blade Runner* licence certainly has the potential to be something very special indeed and there are times during the game when you feel that Westwood are getting close. But at times they seem to fall back into the traditional limitations of modern adventure games rather than trying to break new barriers. Having said that, I still like the game enough to want to play it to completion, which is why I'm highly recommending it. The option to work on several cases at a time is a nice touch and makes Blade Runner less linear than other games of this type and the scenery graphics are stunning in places.

If you're looking for an interactive *Blade Runner* story, here it is. It's not quite a classic but there's enough here to keep even hardened adventurers happy for a couple of weeks. Z





(Right) Oh look, a sewer scene. Quelle suprise.
(Centre) Not exactly Harrison Ford, but he'll do.
(Below) "I said a 42, a 38 and a number 7, dammit!"

In Perspective

Quite a few adventures have tried the noirish future thriller thing of late. *Blade Runner* at least has the advantage of a cast-iron licence to help it. Tex Murphy's last foray was a better experience overall though. However, many years ago, Sierra/Dynamix produced an adventure called *Rise Of The Dragon* that was superb. Better, in fact, than *Blade Runner*. You'll not find it in any shops though so don't bother looking.

Blade Runner

Rise of the Dragon

The Pandora Directive

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb
Processor: P90
Graphics: VGA/SVGA
Sound: All major sound cards
Controls: Mouse

Win 95 Only!

Slow

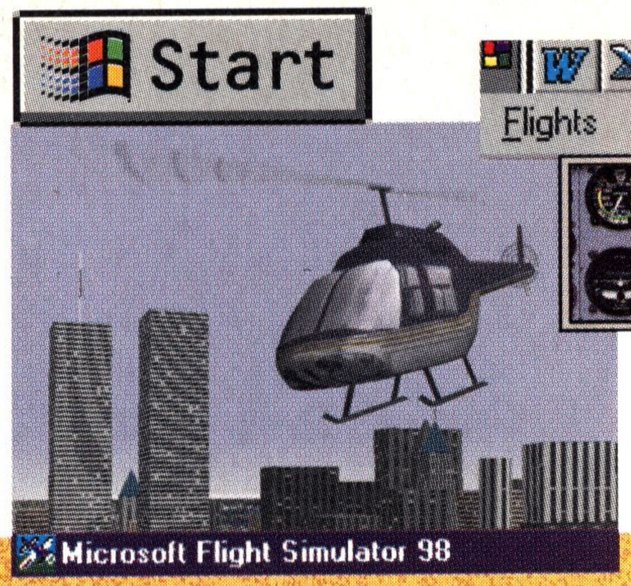
Score

Engrossing and stylish adventure.

88

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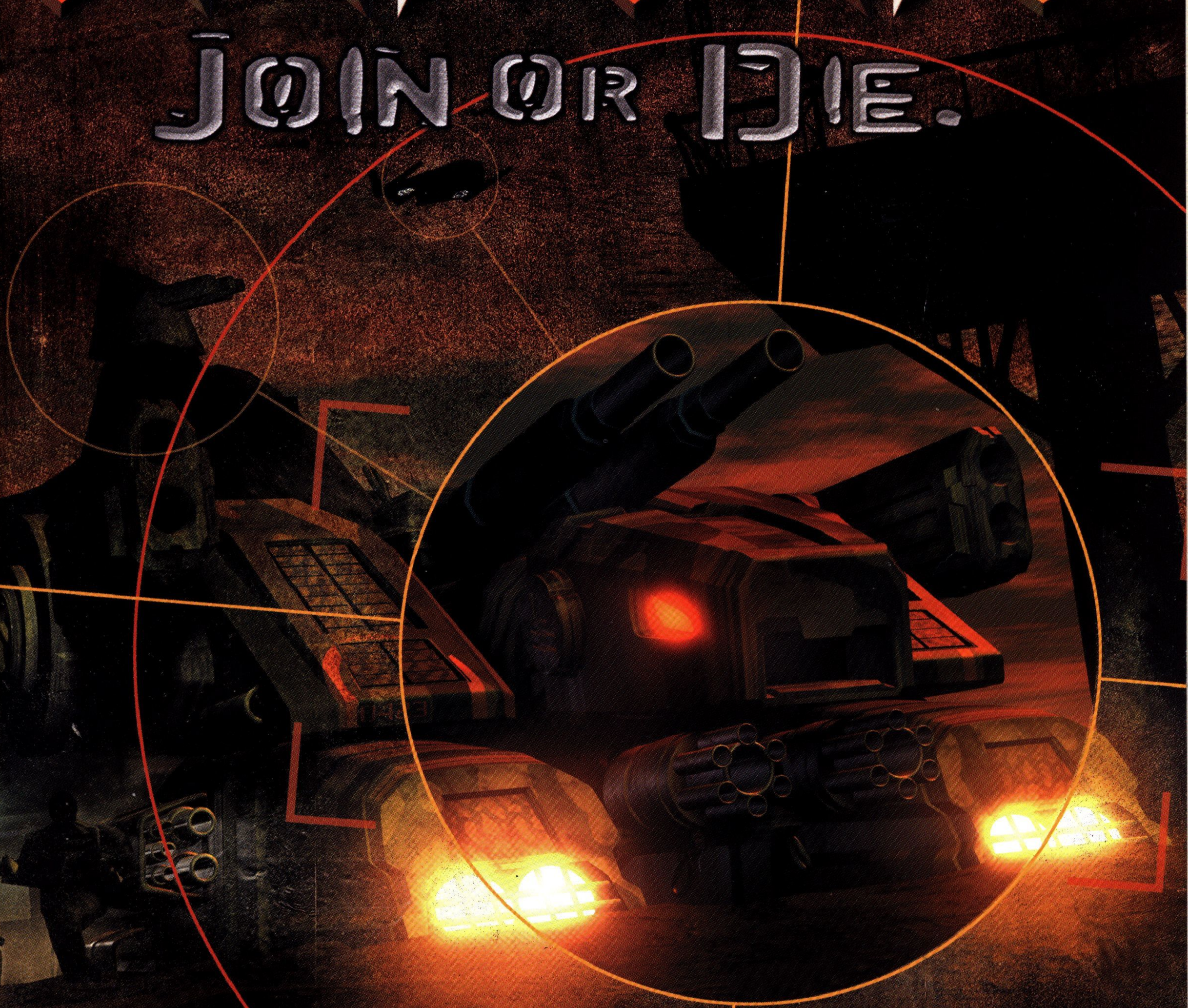
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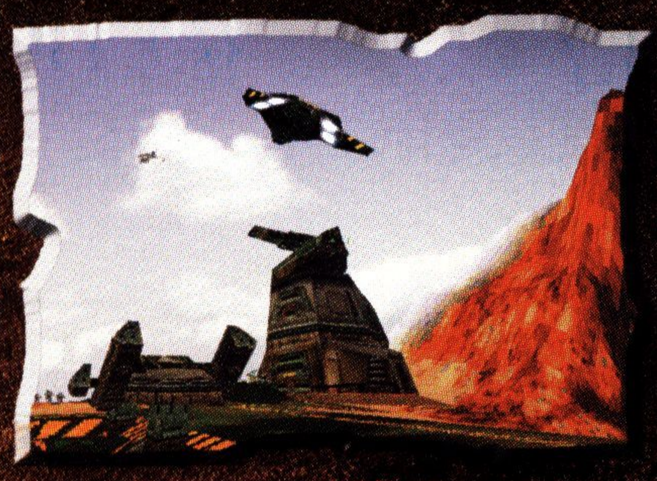
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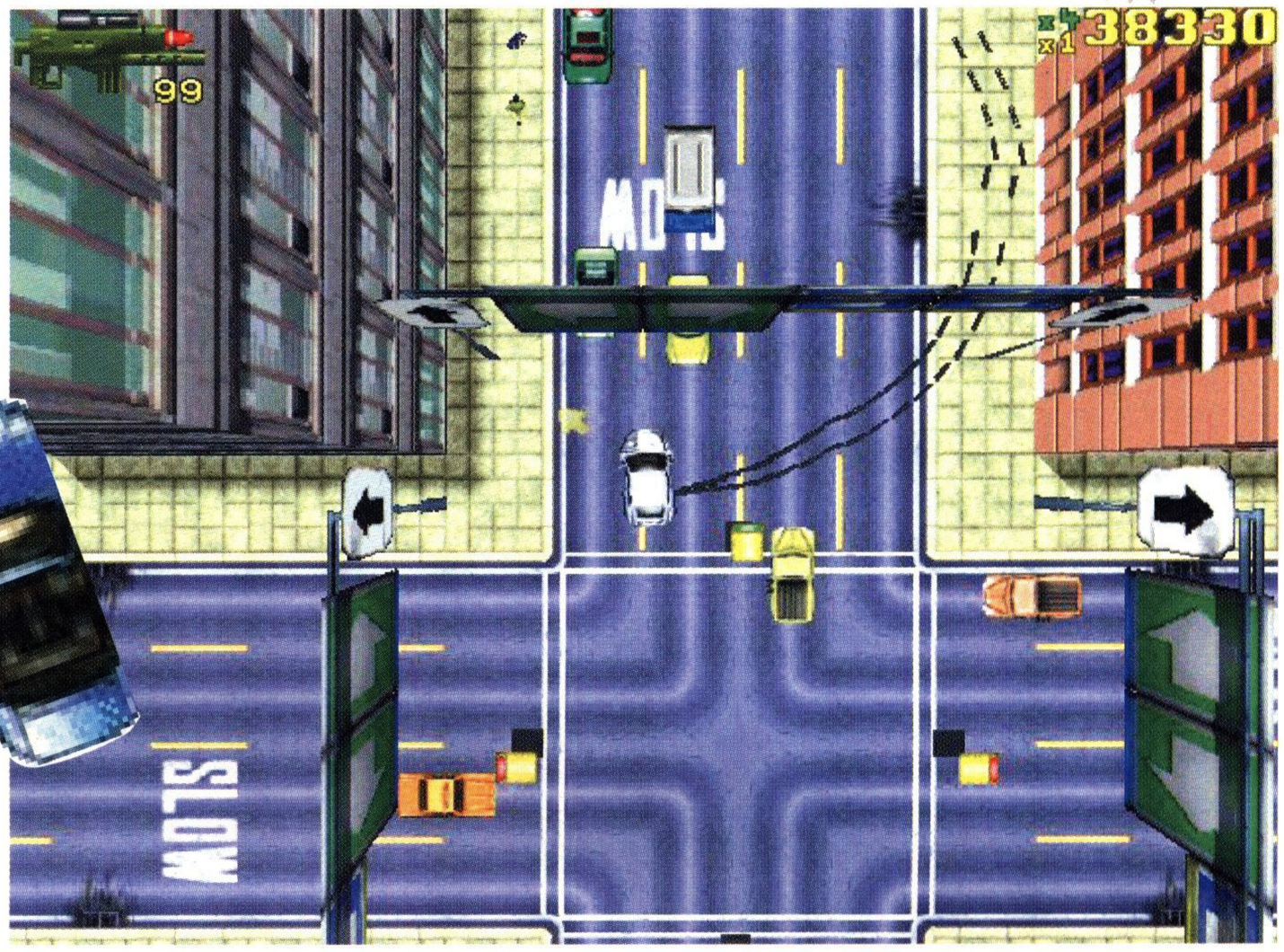
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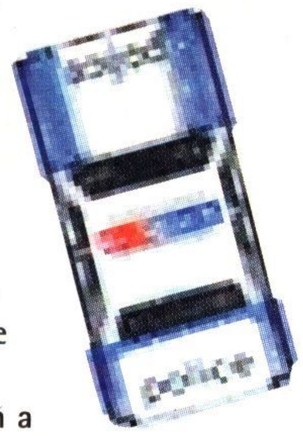
PC ZONE Classic

A shameful piece of so-called entertainment which cheapens us all, or a great laugh with a blistering soundtrack? Guess which side of the argument Charlie Brooker favours...

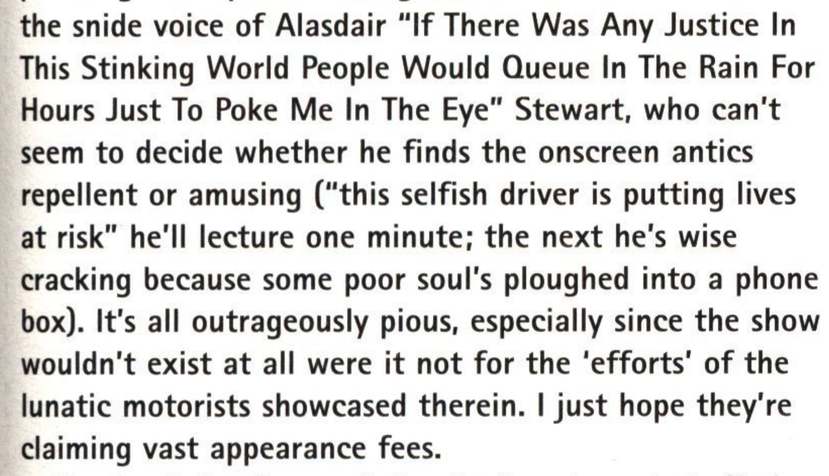




HANDS UP IF YOU HATE Police Camera Action, the 'car crime' TV show. Every edition's identical: some motorway pile-up footage, a bit of reckless lane-changing, lorries with unsafe loads, a 'comical' incident on a roundabout, and a prolonged chase – two million police cars versus one hapless teenage joyrider, filmed from a pursuing helicopter. Floating above it all is the snide voice of Alasdair "If There Was Any Justice In This Stinking World People Would Queue In The Rain For Hours Just To Poke Me In The Eye" Stewart, who can't seem to decide whether he finds the onscreen antics repellent or amusing ("this selfish driver is putting lives at risk" he'll lecture one minute; the next he's wise cracking because some poor soul's ploughed into a phone box). It's all outrageously pious, especially since the show wouldn't exist at all were it not for the 'efforts' of the lunatic motorists showcased therein. I just hope they're claiming vast appearance fees.



The day *Police Camera Action* finally gets yanked off-air, mealy-mouthed Alasdair could probably earn a living commentating live during games of *Grand Theft Auto* instead. Because it's actually very similar to the TV show in many ways, except for one very important one: it's *great*.

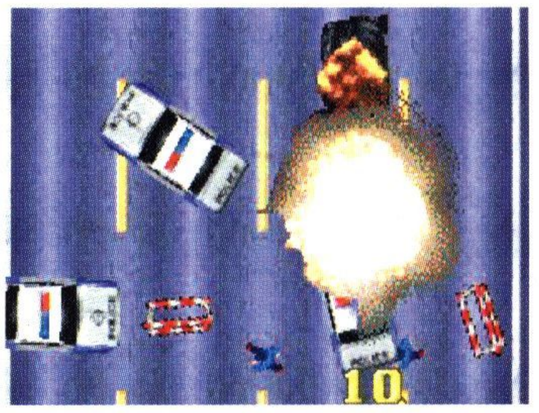


A religious truck, a ball of flames, and many many corpses. Yup. Looks like the apocalypse to me.

"You start out on the pavement, unarmed and inoffensive. This state of affairs will not last long."

Fun Lovin' Criminals

So what's it like? Strikingly similar to the aforementioned helicopter-joyrider footage actually, although if you're after a games-related frame of reference; imagine *Micro Machines* transplanted to a busy, sprawling US city. It's all viewed from overhead, and the controls are pie-simple. There aren't any racetracks, only highly congested urban avenues. The road system works just as it does in real life, with traffic lights, junctions, one-way streets and dual carriageways. You can, if you like, spend hours driving round town at a leisurely pace, obeying the highway code and showing the utmost consideration to your fellow road users. And if that's all you want to do, *do not* buy this game. It will *lead you astray*. If you're *normal* however, you're going to love it.





You start out on foot, on the pavement, unarmed and inoffensive. This state of affairs will not last long. Pick a car, any car. Doesn't matter if it's still moving; simply walk into its path and the driver will come to a halt. Now yank open the door and wrench him out of his seat. Clamber in and drive away. Congratulations – your first carjacking. A serious offence in any country, yet in the world of *GTA* it's small beer. You'll be nicking cars left right and centre. Not to mention buses, oil tankers, ambulances, squad cars, fire trucks – and at one point even *tanks*.

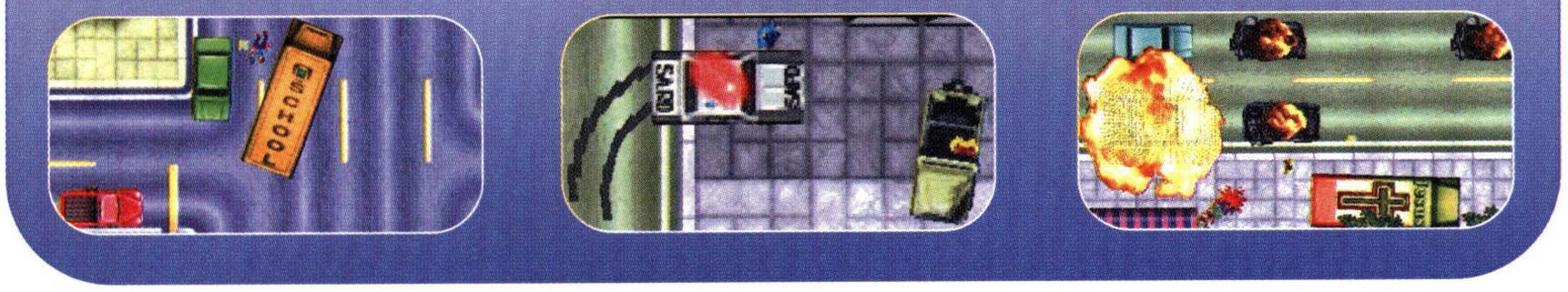
Fun though it is, stealing vehicles isn't the sole object of the game. That would be wussy. No, the underlying aim is to impress the local toughs by committing a series of increasingly serious crimes, across three different cities, ideally evading arrest as you do so. There are two ways of going about this; you can either accept one of the given 'missions', which might consist of anything from driving a getaway car to

listen to me you two-bit mother

Breakin' the law, breakin' the law

Here, in no particular order, is a list of things you can do in *GTA*. It should give you a fair idea of what to expect (and the editor of the *Daily Mail* a coronary). Just remember – *it's only a game*.

- Stand in the middle of a busy junction idly machine-gunning vehicles and passers-by. Until the cops arrive. Then you machine-gun them instead.
- Steal a school bus and drive it over a line of Hare Krishnas as they parade along the sidewalk.
- Rig a truck to explode, then park it beneath the mayor's office. Or any other building, for that matter.
- Drive a sportscar into the oncoming lane at 200mph, then get out just before it explodes and attack everyone you see with a flamethrower.



wiping out a gang of Hell's Angels with a machine gun, or you can go 'freelance' and set out to create as much havoc as you can on your own. Whichever you choose, the chances are that before long the police will be on your tail – which is when the fun *really* starts. Ever watched the aforementioned *Police Camera Action* and wondered why the teenage joyriders never give up, even though 1) the odds are stacked against them and 2) they're getting into deeper trouble with each passing second? You won't when you've played *GTA*. The moment a squad car starts following you, some kind of weird criminal psychosis takes hold and you find you'll do anything – *anything* – to escape. Cue an insane cross-town car chase, with plenty of pile-ups and pedestrian casualties *en-route*. Naturally, the longer you avoid their clutches, the more desperate the police become. Before long they're ramming your car from behind, firing at your tyres *a la* Mel Gibson and setting up roadblocks. If, somehow, you manage to make it to a mob-owned garage (several of which are scattered throughout each city), you can have your numberplates changed and your criminal record wiped. That's the carrot. That's what keeps you on the run – and keeps you playing. The niggling thought that you might just *Get Away With It*.

You'll Never Take Me Alive

GTA works so well because the environment it creates is both believable and versatile. Run someone over, for instance, and an ambulance will arrive on the scene to ferry the victim to hospital. Naturally, you can pinch the ambulance. The fire trucks which appear to douse flaming car wrecks can also be swiped. The truly audacious will concentrate their efforts on stealing as many police cars as possible. The weird thing is it really does *feel* like you're breaking the law in some way: an undeniable buzz. It's original, yet curiously old-skool in flavour. The gameplay may be simple, the car handling hardly realistic, and the graphics more functional than spectacular (yes, it *does* look a bit like an Amiga game), yet it's one of my favourite games of the year. It's *Starsky & Hutch* meets *Reservoir Dogs*, directed by Ice-T. Persevere, because it takes a while to get into, but once you do, you're hooked. I have but one request for the talented team at DMA Design: give us a sequel with polygons and cars that flip over. And give us it now.

Choons! Choooooons!

***GTA* wins the gaming soundtrack of the year award hands down. Each time you pinch a vehicle, you'll find its radio tuned to a different station – complete with jingles and station idents, and playing anything from Drum 'n Bass to Country and Western. Incredibly, *every single track* would be strong enough to stand up in it's own right as a commercial release. Even more incredibly, it's all been recorded in-house. Nuff respect, as they say, to the genius responsible, who deserves a massive bonus. And a medal. And a tonguey kiss from a tipsy, doe-eyed floozy. And some cake.**

Hollywood, GTA



Several of the missions in GTA have clearly been 'inspired' by famous moments of the silver screen. Such as...

SPEED
Yes, there's a mission where you have to drive a bus packed with explosives through the streets, without dropping below 50mph. Now there's a challenge for the next series of *You Bet*.

DIRTY HARRY
Remember how Clint had to run around town answering payphones before they stopped ringing? Yup, that happens as well. Speaking of which, there was a similar bit of payphone-answering schtick in...

DIE HARD 3
... which also included a sequence where Bruce Willis and Samuel L. Jackson ploughed through Central Park in a yellow taxi. Spookily, this *also* happens in *GTA*.

In Perspective

Grand Theft Auto is an anarchistic take on *Micro Machines*. A realistic driving sim it is not. It shares elements of lawlessness with *Carmageddon*, yet it's also very similar to the ancient Speccy game *Turbo Esprit*. So there you go.

Grand Theft Auto

Carmageddon

Micro Machines

Turbo Esprit (ZX Spectrum)

The prolonged car chase from the film 'The Blues Brothers'

Eating a boiled dog

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb
Processor: P90
Graphics: VGA/SVGA
Sound: All major sound cards
Controls: Keyboard, joypad
Note: 3Dfx version works in DOS mode only. But it doesn't really matter that much.

Win 95 Only!

Score

The gaming equivalent of a smack in the mouth.

97

Price: £tbc
Release date: November
Publisher: DMA/BMG
Telephone: 01382 561 333
Website: www.dma.co.uk

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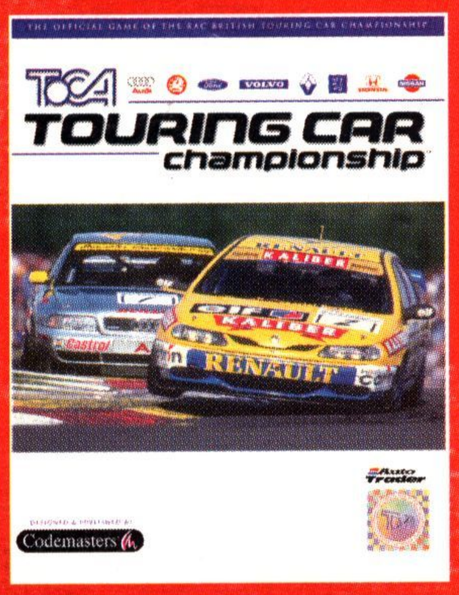
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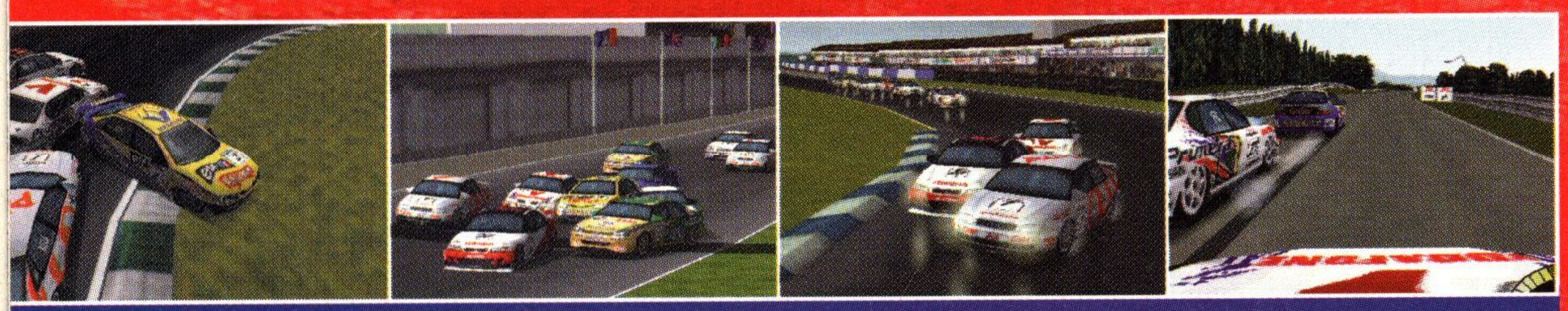


PLAY MAGAZINE 92%

"Packed with smash 'em and crash 'em gameplay! Even more advanced than Formula 1 '97... Incredible. Really fast, really fun, really racing"

PLAYSTATION PLUS

winner 91%



Crash Out | Bump & Grind | Thrash It Out | Cane It

Which of these codes enables you to pass through your opponents?

CMCOLLOFF CMNOHITS CMPASS (1 of 3)

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The Official PlayStation Magazine
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Worms 2

PC ZONE Recommended

Animal rights? The Spaniards chuck horses out of towers, the Chinese suck the brains out of live monkeys, and Andy Martin plays a turn-based strategy game where the soil beasts of the common garden become the Dogs of War.



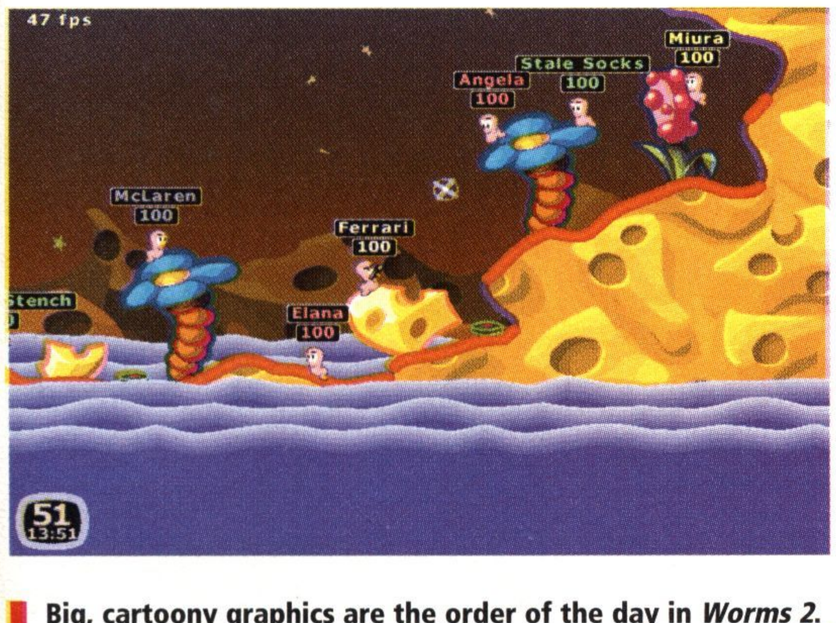
CIVILISED WARFARE? THAT'S A contradiction in terms, you grotesque freak. Statements like that sum up Worms perfectly. It's an excuse to laugh hysterically at landmines and/or Napalm air raids, simply because the 'soldiers' are depicted as comedy cartoon worms. A touch small-minded if you're one of those do-gooders who bought a 'Frankie Says WAR!' T-shirt back in the '80s, but I like Worms. It is a great game – morally bankrupt or not.

Now *Worms 2* is here, with new things added and old things taken away. There's local network and Internet support now available for the posh office types among us, but it's the 'friends round' situation that still makes *Worms 2* entertaining. In addition to the new weapons, a number of changes have been made to both the pre-game options and existing game accessories. Thankfully, for those of us who can't hack traipsing through numerous option screens before playing a game, there's a Quick-Start feature to love. On the other hand, for everyone who enjoys clicking on small arrows and sliding icons, there's an absolute plethora of new and improved options that makes reading the in-box pamphlet necessary.



There in body

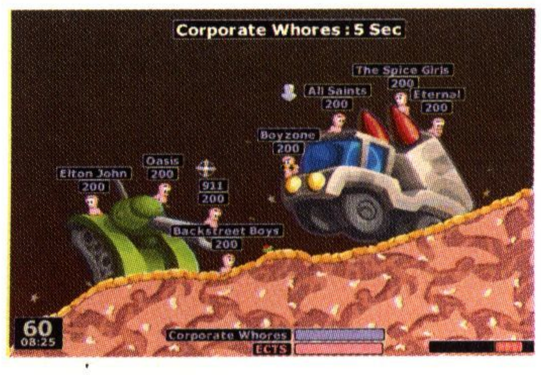
With the default settings switched on, *Worms 2* very much resembles its mother: a simple, enjoyable, frustratingly playable game that makes up in gameplay what it lacks in visuals. For beginners, with the patience to persevere and learn how to play, the thing is a joy, but for the seasoned professional, appeal only lies in its improved 'party trick' capabilities.

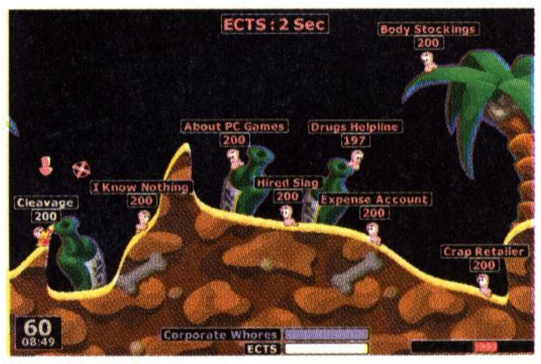


Big, cartoony graphics are the order of the day in *Worms 2*.

Build a team of up to eight worms, name them and let the fun begin. It is now possible to select computer opponents of varying intelligence with varying accents or languages, choose from six levels of screen detail (affecting the speed the whole thing runs at), or take on missions *ala 'Worms: Reinforcements'*. The actual 'options' game menu resembles an encyclopaedia and appears to contain little more than a variety of switches and dials that change times and wind strength etc. However, closer inspection reveals some odd additions, such as a friction level setting (friction apparently being the reaction of Worms or weapons to the scenery). To list even half of the strings and pulleys and explain them in detail would be impossible in two pages, which to a certain extent is a failing of *Worms 2*, but does make reading the (informative) manual very important.

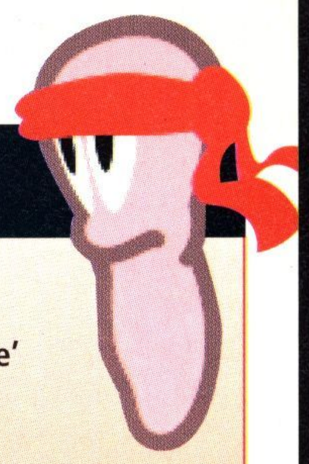
Of all its overbearing menus and options, it's the most basic looking and easy-to-use new filling to the *Worms 2* cavity that's the most enjoyable. 'Graffiti' is the nickname given to the simple level designer included in the *Worms 2* package. Select a brush size and you can have fun designing islands with crevices and caves to play on (or write words such as 'arse' in big letters and play on them like I did).





(Top) Angela sleeps with the fishes tonight. (Middle) This little lot are prime candidates for an airstrike. (Above) The ECTS team in full effect.

Bloody hell! Take cover!



The Egyptians coveted felines because they considered them funny. Today we covet small pink invertebrates because they've got big new weapons. And here they are. There's also 'mystery' weapons that drop to earth randomly. But we're not going to tell you about them. Ha!



HOMING PIGEON
Goes round corners – making it far more accurate than the homing missile.



PETROL BOMB
A favourite in Toxteth, but this working class Napalm is of little use in *Worms 2*.



MINE
Mines no longer explode immediately. The delay before the explosion can be altered.



HOMING CLUSTER BOMB
Very handy over long distances. Does 'the business' on large groups of Worms.



BASEBALL BAT
Novelty weapon this one – good in that the angle its swung at can be altered.



HANDGUN
Three shots from a reasonably powerful cap gun. Banned in this country.



PARACHUTE
Wind direction must be taken into account before use. Stunningly accurate.



MING VASE
A more entertaining alternative to dynamite – porcelain destruction over a big space.



OLD WOMAN
Handy for sending off ledges. Probably smells of cabbage and stuff.



MAD COWS
Not a weapon Steve 'Vegetate' Hill would consider using.



SUPER BANANA
A fantastic weapon. As powerful as its standard brother, but more accurate.



SUPER SHEEP
A flying sheep which the player controls. No, really. Exceptional.



HOMING AIR-STRIKE
Come adore this thing, and it's wonderful accuracy.



SHEEP STRIKE
Like the standard air strike, fears the power of its homing cousin.



POSTAL STRIKE
More of a test of skill than an air raid, it's float path is affected by the wind.



NAPALM STRIKE
Used accurately, it sends its victims tumbling onto innocent bystanders.



NINJA ROPE
A favourite accessory, but its use is restricted this time around.



DYNAMITE
Place this on the head of any rival, light the blue touchpaper and stand well back.



PROD
Precariously positioned Worms can be helped on their way with this move.

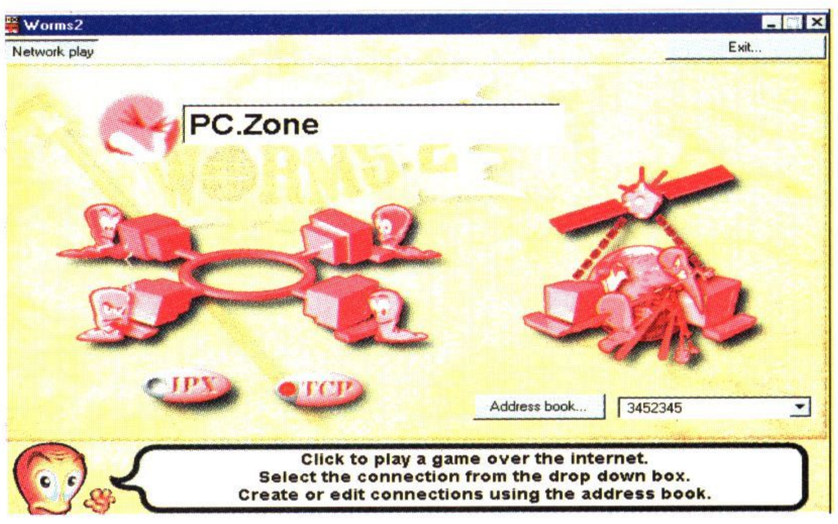


HOLY HAND GRENADE
The best of all the new weapons. Detonates to a chorus of 'Hallelujah'.

But not in soul

Strangely though, the old skool idea of being able to kill an opponent by knocking a worm off-screen is now impossible, for the simple reason that water always surrounds the computer/player designed arenas. The introduction of caverns has balanced this out, adding a new strategy element to *Worms*, simply because air strikes cannot be used underground, thus making sudden death a sometimes violent affair as the land begins to dwindle beneath your slimy team of soldiers. To cap it all, once a level's been chosen/designed, selecting one of 14 scenarios will instruct the computer to lump huge objects randomly around the land mass. While this is a nice idea the sheer size of these objects can often box one of your worms in, once you've run out of teleports and ninja rope.

The beauty of *Worms 1* was that it didn't really matter that the graphics weren't exactly up to much. Quite why it wasn't left this way is a mystery. Instead the game has been redrawn and made to look like some kind of cartoon offshoot. The new-look Worms do ooze character and there are some lovely animated weapons, but now the Worms, objects and arenas are a bit *too* big. The view is a bit restricted because of this. It's while trying to aim at an opponent, that it becomes difficult to see where you're firing, and *Worms 2* becomes annoying. With no 'zoom out' feature this often makes it a case of 'hit and hope' – leaving single-player games in some of the smaller caverns sometimes stultifyingly dull. It would be easy to describe *Worms 2* as depicting an iconoclastic fraternity, deseminating ribald proletarian zealotry. For what it's worth I say this: big pictures spoil a potential classic. Which is a shame. Z



***Worms 2* comes with built-in Internet play, which is great.**

In Perspective

It would appear that someone here has tried rather too hard to improve on the original by changing the pour-over sauce and subsequently vital gameplay ingredients are missing. It really is quite tragic. There are things in life though, quite clearly, that are much worse though. Here are some of them...

Worms

Worms 2

Giving blood

A night out, followed by a curry

A worm curry

Finding blood on the loo roll

Being a bloke, but called Wendy

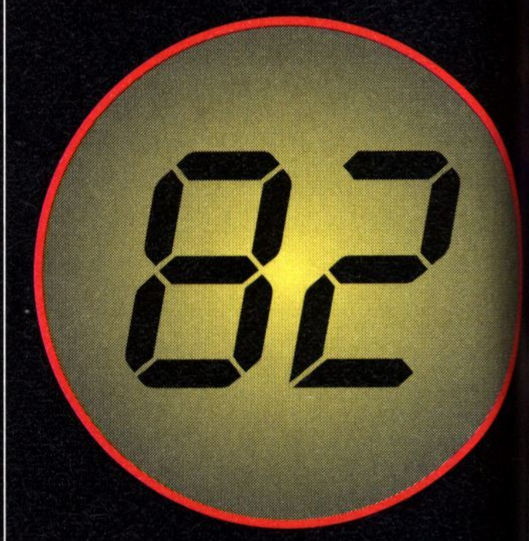
Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb
Processor: P133
Graphics: SVGA
Sound: All major sound cards
Controls: Keyboard



Score

Cometh the sequel, cometh the dissapointment. Here endeth the lesson.



Price: £29.99
Release date: Out now
Publisher: MicroProse
Website: www.worms2.com

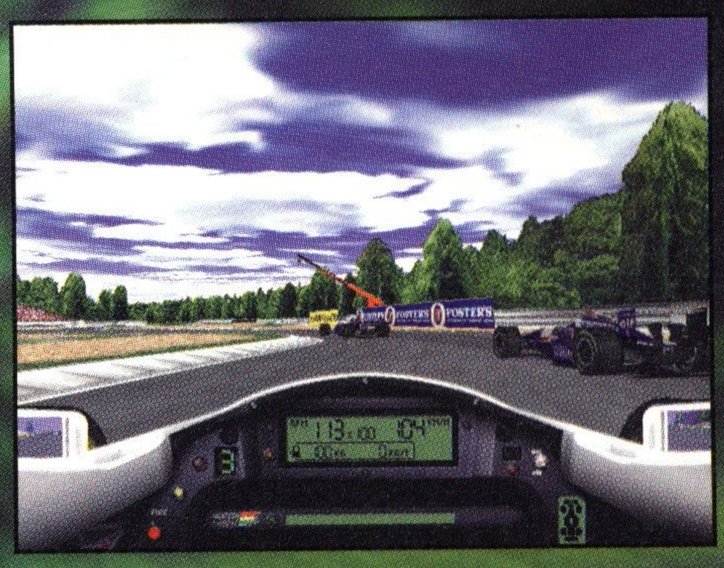
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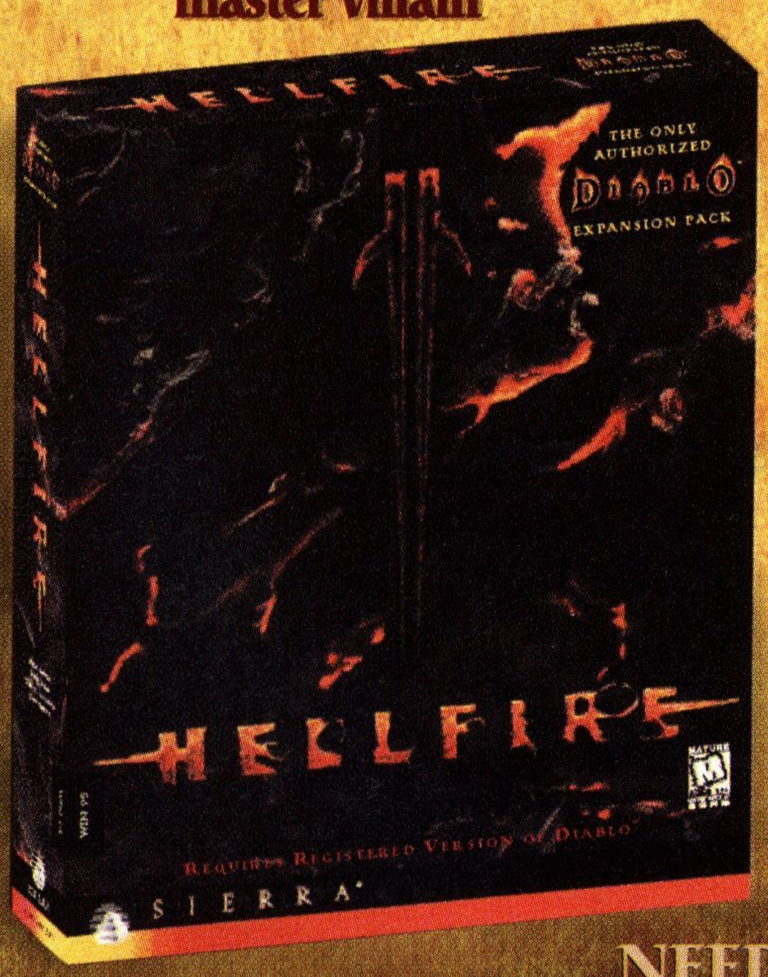
HELLFIRE

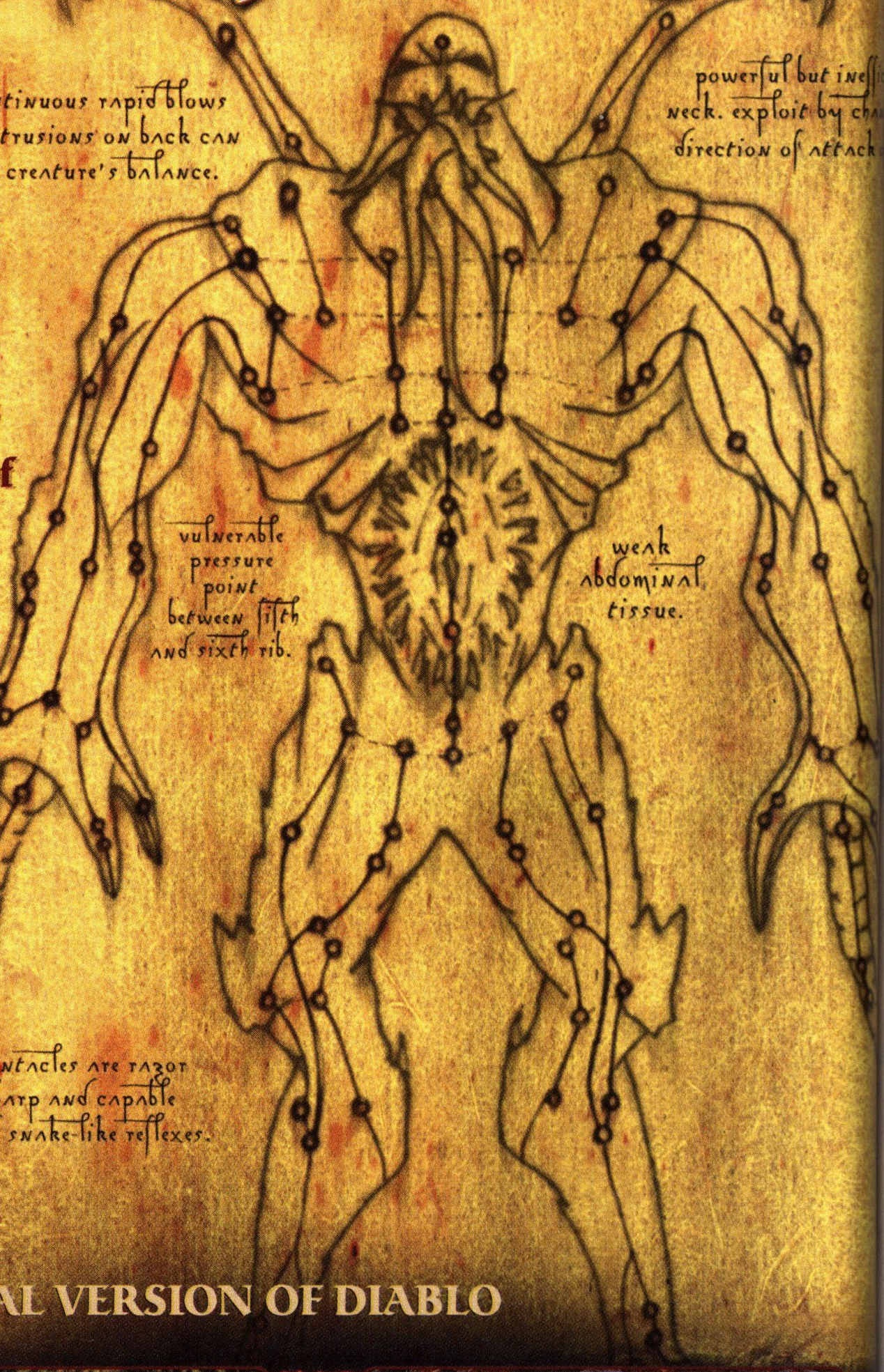
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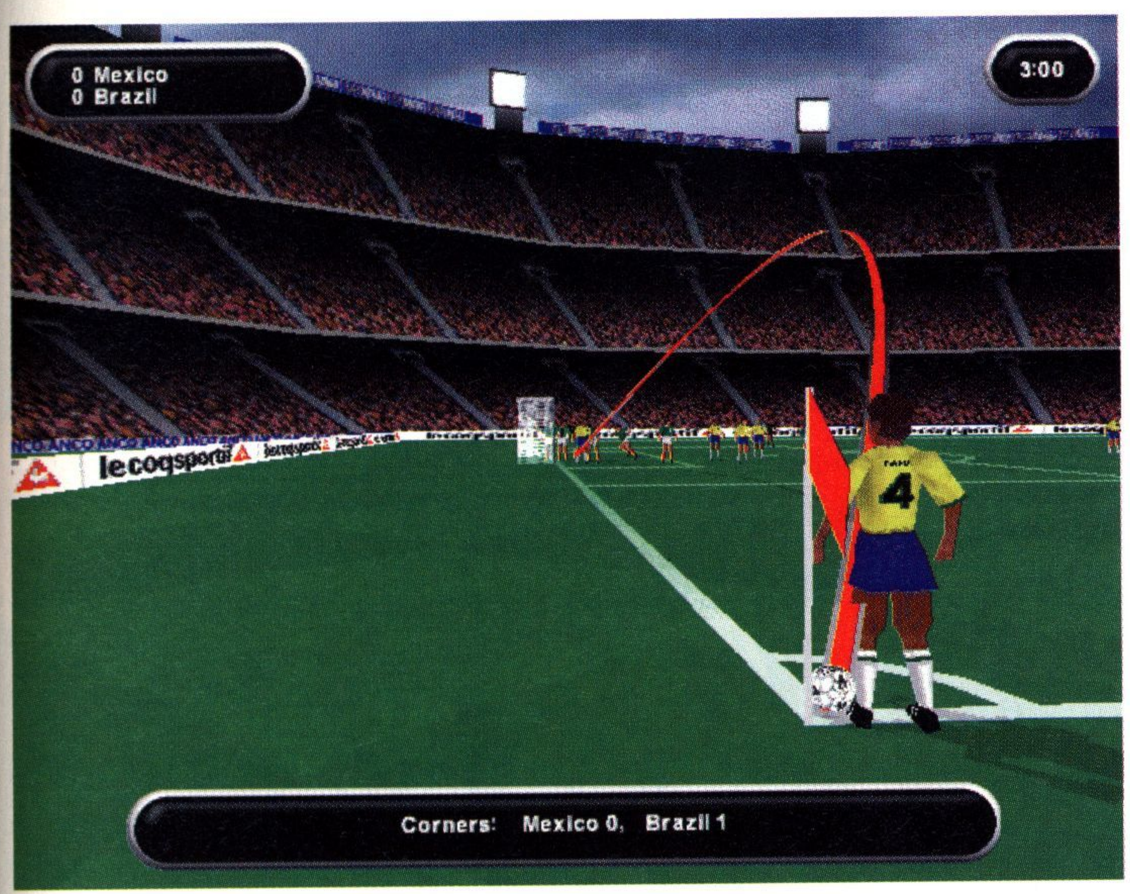


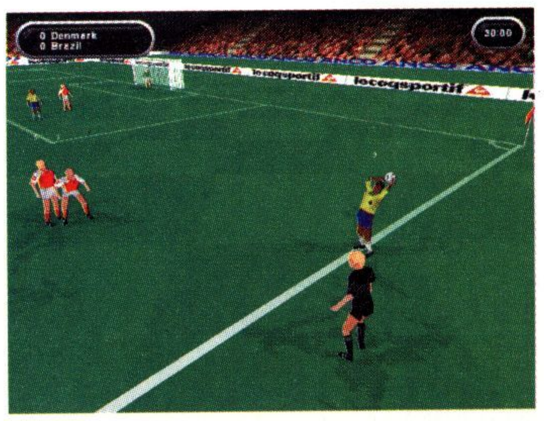
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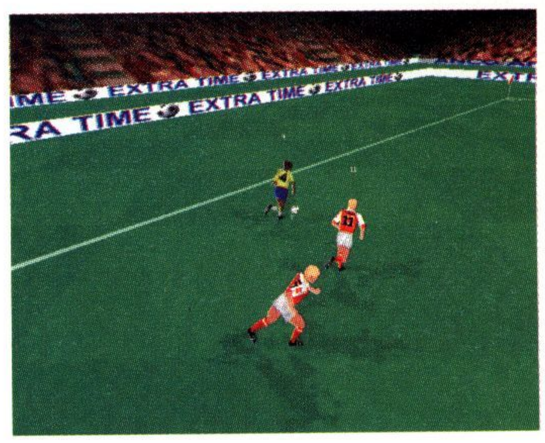
http://www.sierra-online.co.uk

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(Main) Yeah okay, we know it looks as though this player's pissing blood, but he's actually aiming his corner kick. Can you guess where he's going to put it? (Top right) A throw in, for those unfamiliar with the basic rules of Association Football. (Bottom right) Some jinking wing play from the Brazilian number 4. Not really.

Kick Off 98

Steve Hill nearly went off football after his run-in with the Italian police at England's World Cup qualifier in Rome. He's decided that football on the PC's much safer...

MERE EIGHT MONTHS AFTER KICK OFF 97, we're presented with the somewhat premature Kick Off 98. Naturally, we're told that this latest version is brilliant compared to the last incarnation, but then this time next year (or sooner) we'll no doubt be told that Kick Off 99 is miles better than Kick Off 98.

But we're not influenced by such marketing nonsense. Despite being little more than football by numbers, *Kick Off 97* was actually quite playable. Even at the time of its release Anco were working on a new engine, ensuring that the long lineage would continue, and it's fair to say that the original *Kick Off* and its sequel are genuinely seminal games.



A close-up of number 9 kicking off in *Kick Off 98*.

The licence has lost some of its weight now, but market forces dictate that they keep churning them out, and *Kick Off 98* has a timely World Cup slant to it, featuring a host of international teams and competitions. The interface is pretty garish and actually getting to play a game is unnecessarily awkward – and the fact that it's accompanied by some particularly irritating music doesn't improve matters.

Oh no, an own goal!

But as any pundit will confirm, it's on the pitch that counts, and it's here that *Kick Off 98*'s real failings become apparent. For starters, there's far too much periphery, which makes it a disjointed, annoying experience. This is immediately evident: each game begins with a pointless close-up of the ball, replete with the Anco logo. The nature of football demands something a lot more instant; there's no need for elaborate motion captures of keepers bouncing the ball, and half-time should be no longer than it takes for a drag on a handily placed cigarette. It's also a fair assumption that most people are familiar with the rules: it's not necessary for the shiny metallic words 'throw' and 'in' to come spinning on to the screen whenever the ball is put into touch.

Much of the play consists of jarring tackles in the middle of the park, most of which go unpunished by the referee. All the subtleties of The Beautiful Game are lost, with very little time afforded to the player in possession, making a passing game virtually impossible. On the rare occasions that you do manage to find some space the passing often feels predetermined by the computer, as is the crossing and the shooting, leaving little room for skill or individuality.

A couple of new ideas have been introduced: sprinting when in possession of the ball entails nudging it ahead in a vaguely realistic fashion, and the unique penalty taking system is a nice idea but unfortunately it just doesn't work. The commentary is provided by an actor, and is as poor as the muffled crowd noises it accompanies.

If *Kick Off 98* was a Premier League side, it would have to be Wimbledon – it tries its best. With enough determination it could almost become enjoyable for a limited period, but sadly there are just too many other games on the market that look and play better.

In Perspective

SInce its inception on the Amiga some years ago, there have been enough *Kick Off* games released to merit an 'In Perspective' all of their own, with the excellent *Kick Off 2* still managing to hold its own against its latter-day counterparts. The original isn't far behind and indeed *Kick Off 97* can still hold its own. Shame about *Kick Off 98* then.

Kick Off 98

Kick Off

Kick Off 2

Kick Off 96

Kick Off 97

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb (Recommended)
Processor: Pentium 100
Graphics: VGA/SVGA
Sound: All major sound cards
Controls: Joypad, keyboard

Direct Input

Score

Frustrating and annoying in equal amounts.

68

Price: £29.99
Release date: Out now
Publisher: Ubi Soft
Telephone: 0181 944 9000
Website: www.ubisoft.com

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PC CD-ROM

Eastern Front

Question: Will the new wargames engine from Talonsoft let them break into the mainstream gaming market? Or will it be boxed with a sticky "I'm an anorak" label? Andrew Wright doesn't know...

PC ZONE Recommended



Soviets attacking in the snow, bless. Remind you of Airfix kits, don't they?

IT MUST BE HARD FOR WARGAMES developers. They spend years recreating the sights and sounds of battle, down to the last intricate detail, only to see their work outsold several times over by unrealistic – but highly playable – titles like Panzer General.

With *Panzer General II* nearly ready, Talonsoft is mounting a pre-emptive strike with *Eastern Front*, a super-charged version of its *Battleground* series, which it hopes will appeal to hardcore wargamers *and* mainstream strategy players.

Eastern Front has a completely new engine behind it, although there are broad similarities with *Battleground Ardennes*. It's a hex-based, platoon-scale simulation with each unit representing several vehicles or squads. The map still has a fixed viewpoint although this time it can be reversed if you're playing for 'the other side'.

Despite having the *Battleground* look and feel, *EF* takes a completely different approach. Each unit has up to 100 'Action Points' and depending on the unit type, uses up its Points for each action carried out. This means that vehicles aren't just lumped into categories but can perform better on certain types of terrain. What's more, the units can usually fire more than once, if they cut down on movement. Additionally, although it's turn-based, units can hold back Action Points for defensive or opportunity fire, in much the same way as *X-Com*, which gives it more of a real-time feel.

Click on a unit and a 'clock' appears displaying its strength, fire cost, action, morale, defence and assault values, plus various symbols to indicate things like passengers, ammo availability and so on.

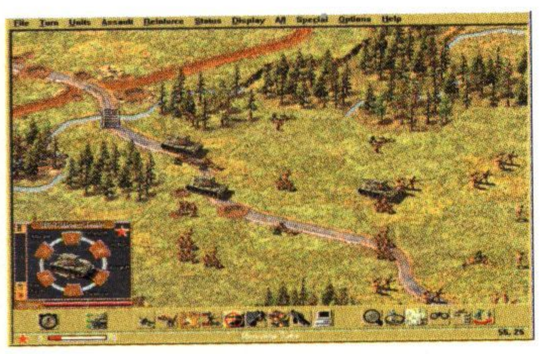
This is the best part of *EF*'s neat, mouse-driven interface, which doesn't require you to learn dozens of shortcut keys. In short, if it isn't in the tool bar at the bottom of the screen, it isn't worth remembering but in case you want the works, there's the traditional menu bar along the top that can be switched on and off.

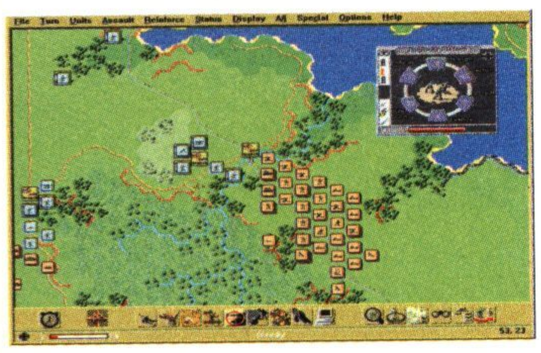
The units are fully animated when they move – and that includes the infantry. No sliding around in the snow here. Admittedly it can take a while to watch the AI take its turn – up to five minutes on a Pentium 100 in the more complex scenarios – but scrolling around is never a problem. There are five zoom levels too, including two 2D ones. At full magnification, the detailed graphics are simply awesome.

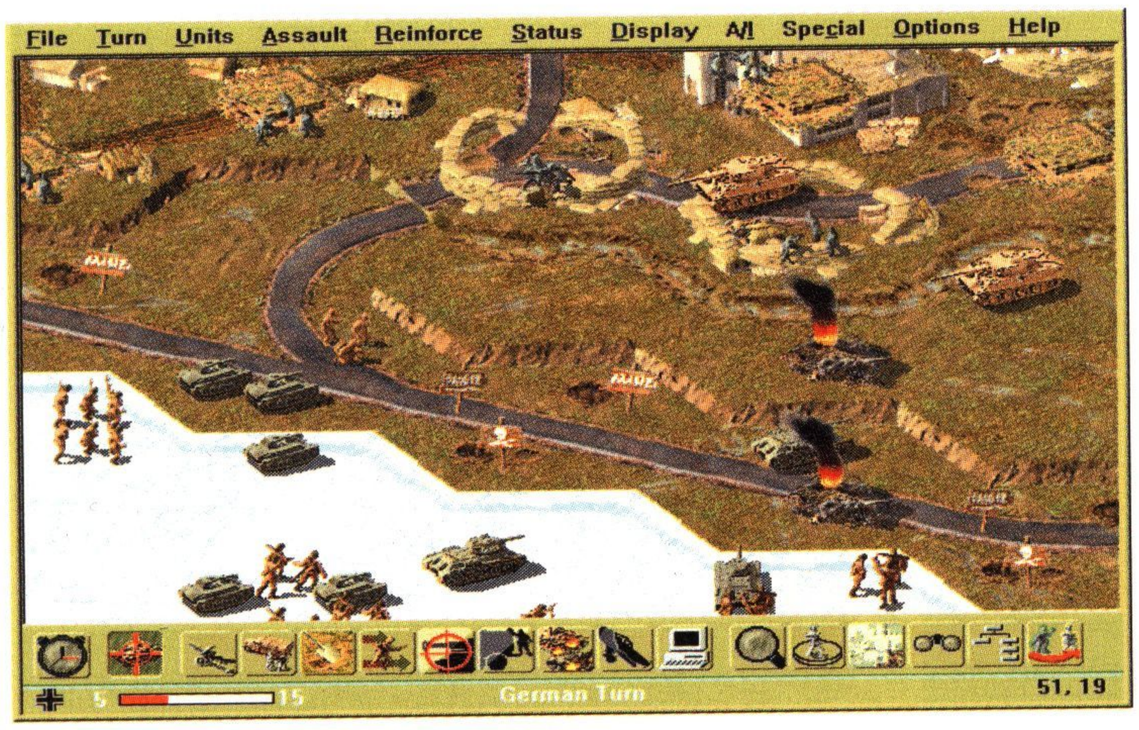
Maps in *EF* can be almost unlimited in size so you can play massive scenarios up to corps level – as long as you spend the time designing them in the map and scenario editors, of course. The real reason behind this, is the new multiplayer upgrade which should be ready shortly. This will allow up to 16 players to take part in massive battles over the Internet or a network with each player commanding a battalion, division or whatever they desire, on one side.

For lone-players the campaign element should provide plenty of entertainment as you move up and onwards commanding bigger and better units.

As a simulation it could do more, but it blows the turret off the *Panzer General* series. Quite who'll come out on top in round two is anyone's guess though... Z







(Above left) Those KV-2s are mean as shit – unless you happen to have a spare 88 lying around... Wannabe boring people can try it in 2D. (Above right) I wonder if they'll step on those minefields. They'll never guess what those signs mean...

In Perspective

Eastern Front offers a great balance between playability and realism that leaves its more simplistic games competitors way behind in the quality stakes – but at the end of the day, will it be enough to satisfy the real wargamer?

Steel Panthers

Eastern Front

Battleground Ardennes

Panzer General

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: 486 or better

Graphics: 16-bit colour, any resolution

Sound: All Windows-compaible sound cards

Note: 5-370Mb of disk space needed

DirectX 3D | Win 95 Only! | Internet Play | 486 Friendly

Score

Corking graphics and dive-in playability should make it a winner... Unlike Hitler

84

Price: £39.99

Release date: November

Publisher: Empire Interactive

Telephone: 0181 343 7337

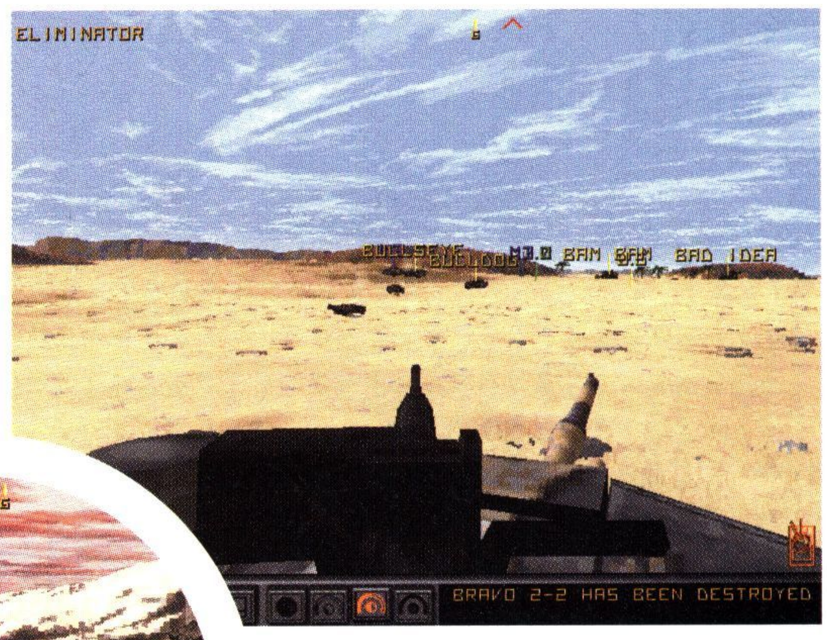
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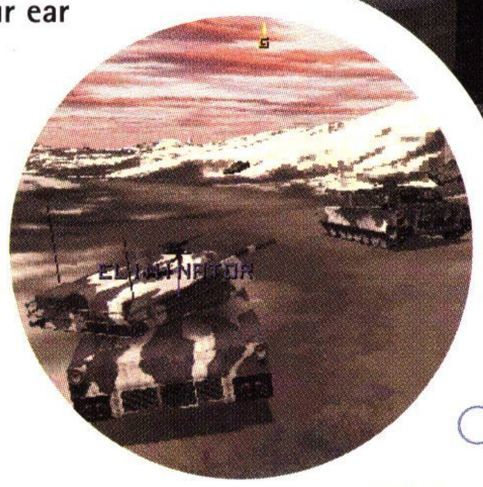
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Armoured Fist 2

The last time Patrick McCarthy tried *Armoured Fist* he acquired Rusty Bowel Syndrome. It was so entertaining we gave him the sequel.

I'M GETTING REALLY TIRED OF SHOUTY, overbearing sergeant major types you get in any military game which has tutorial missions in it. All that garbage they spout: "Alright ladies, I'm your goddam instructor. You will do this. You will do that. The only way you're leaving mah trainin' course is in a body bag – and if you don't, I'm gonna push my penis into yur ear and make you sing songs from West Side Story..." Or whatever. Sadly, everyone does it now. The thing is, they not only don't work, they have exactly the opposite effect to that which is intended. As soon as someone starts shouting at me, I just drive about in my tank and start shelling all my comrades and blowing up all their buildings. Of course, that makes them start yelling at you even more. But they don't do anything, do they? Pussies.





(Above) Ian received the news that Bravo 2-2 had been destroyed with equanimity. He'd never liked him (Left) "Does anyone want anything down the shop?" asked Terry.

All change. (Not.)

Of course, we all know how to play the game anyway, so we don't need these tutorials. The reason we know how to play it is that we played the first one, and liked it a lot. We like tank games anyway – sneaking about in a gulley, popping up to blow the life out of an ice-cream van, then sneaking back into the gulley again – it's all very appealing, in the same way a sub game is. (Only faster, obviously. And not in water.) And this has everything you could wish for in a tank game – you can control anything from one tank to lots of tanks, jump about between tanks and between different 'jobs' in the same tank, plot waypoints, plan missions, and so on. But then, you could in the last version.

Again, like the last one, there are one-off blasts of various descriptions, accompanied by four campaigns with interlinked missions – including the dubious sounding Operation Provide Relief, which I thought was what ladies in nylon undergarments did for tired businessmen.

What's new?

So anyway, you start to wonder what's new. Well, there's the multiplayer option, which no self-respecting game should be without these days, and there's the improved graphics. Except that the graphics aren't *that* improved. Don't get me wrong, they're better than the previous game, which had a giant-carpet-tile effect whenever you got close to something. But considering every other game we've seen lately has built-in 3D-hardware support, the lack of anything of the sort makes this look a bit crap by comparison. You only have to compare it to something like *Screamer Rally*. On my old P90, *Rally's* hugely-detailed graphics still run like excrement off a garden digging implement, thanks to 3Dfx. This, on the other hand, jerks more than a teenage boy with a Russ Meyer video and the house to himself. So the graphics are better, but hardly stunning by today's standards and you'll need a much better machine to play what is essentially the same game. Which means therefore, it gets a lower score. 7





(Above left) Sometimes Gerald would amuse his co-workers by smoking and blowing rings out of the gun-barrel (Above right) What kind of a sicko calls their tank after the kid in the *Flintstones*?

In Perspective

This one looks better than the last version, but still isn't that wonderful, and looks pixelly in places. The improved graphics means it runs slower than Mike McShane up a hill when run on anything but high-end Pentia. Since the jerkiness impacts on things such as aiming, don't buy this unless you have at least a P166, despite what it says on the box. A 3dfx option would have made it all a lot more palatable.

Armoured Fist

Armoured Fist 2

IM1A2 Abrams

Battle Zone (Atari)

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: Pentium

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Joystick, mouse, keyboard

Internet Play

Network Play

Score

Nice enough, but much the same as the previous one

76

Price: £tba

Release date: Out now

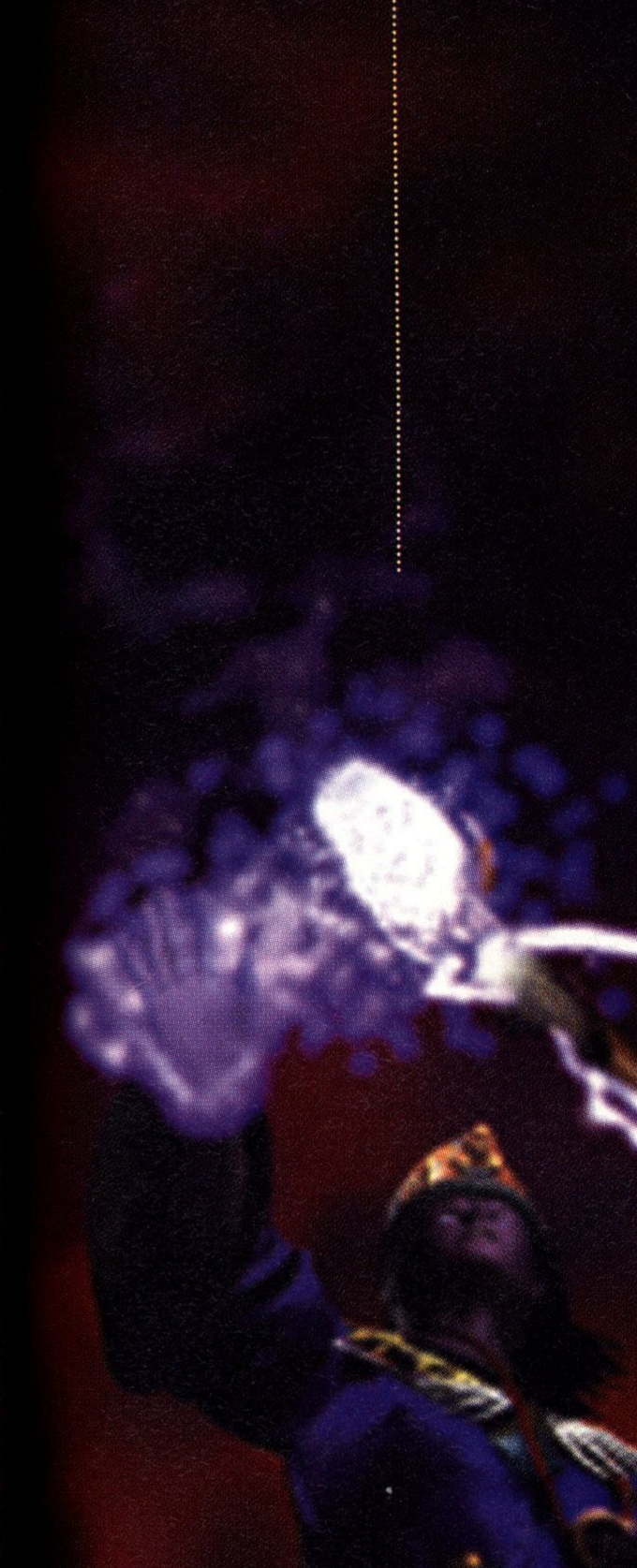
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When the powerful sorcerer Balkoth threatens the peaceful people of Urak with death and destruction, brave heroes and magical powers must rise up to stop the reign of terror and defeat the forces of tyranny. In Lords of Magic, the successor to the popular Lords of the Realm II, you enter a fantasy world where good and evil fight for primacy against a mystical backdrop of wizards, spells and storms, giants, gnomes and Barbarians.

eight magical races

Building on the dramatic features that made Lords of the Realm II a break-through in strategy gaming, Lords of Magic combines turn-based exploration and resource management with real-time combat. Join forces with others (up to six players can compete on a LAN or over the Internet) or marshal your forces to take on Balkoth and his Barbarian allies alone. You'll command up to eighty creatures, including elves, vampires, skeletons and gargoyles, as you defeat evil and save the realm. Wielding the forces of magic through spells and artifacts of power, you can take multiple paths to victory: more choices, more outcomes, and unlimited replayability.



3-D Terrain Editor

Lords of Magic features true 3-D game map, with 16 bit SVGA Graphics and a powerful map editor that puts you in control of terrain height, topography and texture.

It's the ultimate in strategy gaming and its coming your way soon .....

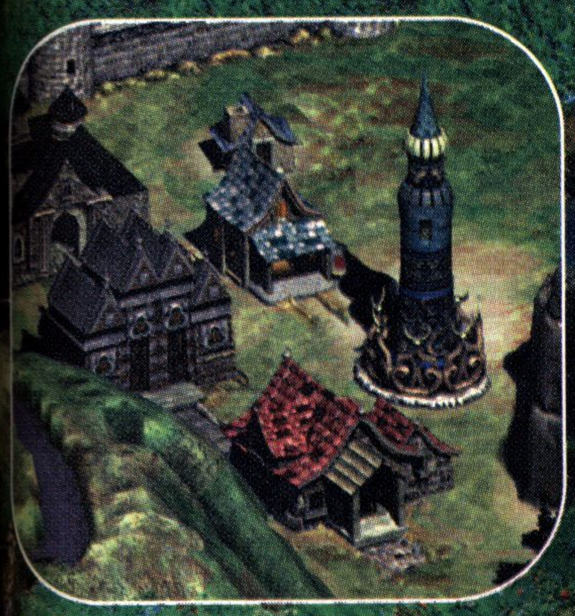
As you explore the land of Urak, you'll battle in dark and mysterious caves, castles and dungeons

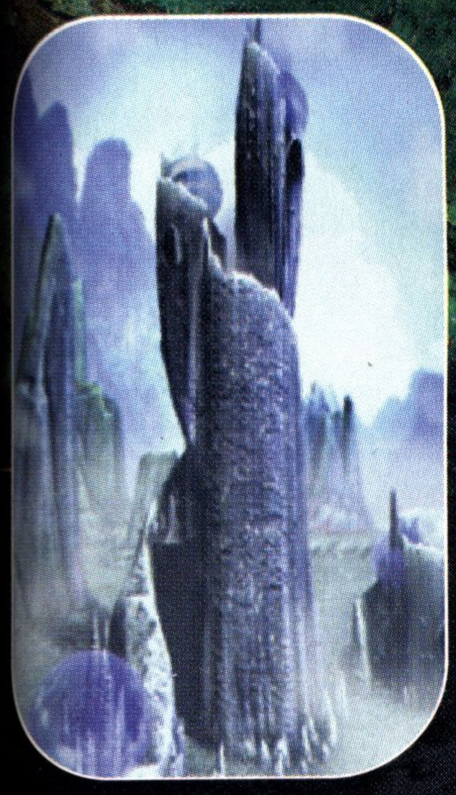


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Heroes are born in times of desperation

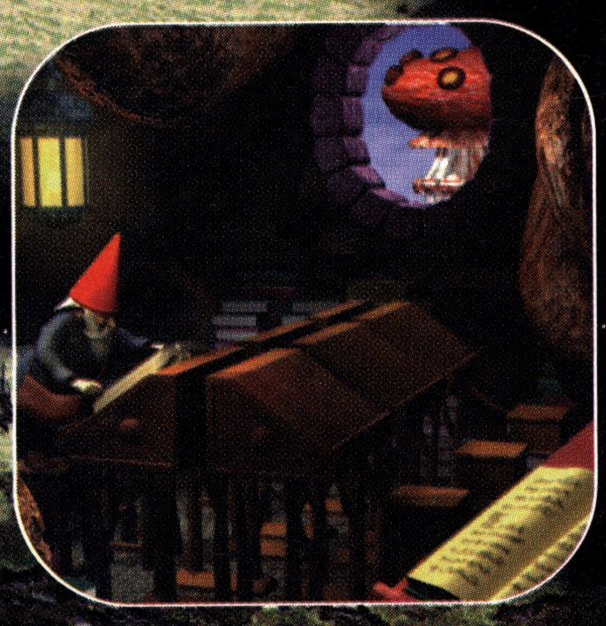




Deep inside your wizard tower sorcerers
practice their secret arts to conjure
magical creatures and train new acolytes

In your library wizards
will research spells to
overpower your enemies





When you confront the
enemy forces of Balkoth,
"Zoom in" to real time combat

Zork: The Grand Inquisitor

PC ZONE Recommended

Go north. Get dictionary. Go west. Get Paul Presley's copy. Use dictionary on Paul Presley's copy. Sack freelancer now.



"You are standing next to a white house." Ah, memories.

IT'S FRIDAY NIGHT AND IT'S CHANNEL Four. I'm watching the end of the American sit-com Cybill. The plot of this week's LA-based adventure concerns Cybill and her best friend Maryanne attending a friend's wedding and inadvertently disrupting the event. I've laughed approximately three times during the entire twenty-four minutes it's been on. Not a good sign.

The show ends, the adverts come on and lead us up to the American sit-com *Frasier*. Five minutes into this latest tale of everyone's favourite Seattle-based radio psychologist and I've already been reduced to a weeping pile of laughter on the floor. A very good sign.

Jump forward several weeks and the adventure game *Broken Sword II* is coming to an end. I've been playing it for approximately three evenings and encountered roughly four really challenging puzzles. Not a good sign.

My next assignment for *PC Zone* is to review *Zork: The Grand Inquisitor*. The discs are installed and the game begins. Half an hour in and I've already encountered three stunningly designed puzzles. A very good sign.

And your point?

The point is this; be it adventure games or TV comedies, when you have something that is well written and well designed, it shows from the start. *ZGI* is one such game and, coming so soon after the relative disappointments of *Broken Sword II* and *Riven*, it shines all the brighter for it.

One of the most notable aspects about the game is how close it actually feels to the original (or 'classic') *Zork* text adventures. One of my overriding fears for any long running series is when the creative hands are no longer those of the original author(s), that the essential 'magic' will be lost. Look what happened to the *Batman* movies once they ditched Tim Burton. Fortunately, Laird M. Malamed, Elizabeth Storz, Margaret Stohl and the other designers, artists and programmers behind the game have succeeded in pulling off a *Zork* adventure that superbly manages to capture the same atmosphere, sense of style and wit and the same feeling of challenge that the original *Zorks* had in abundance and that the more recent effort of *Zork Nemesis* didn't manage to achieve.

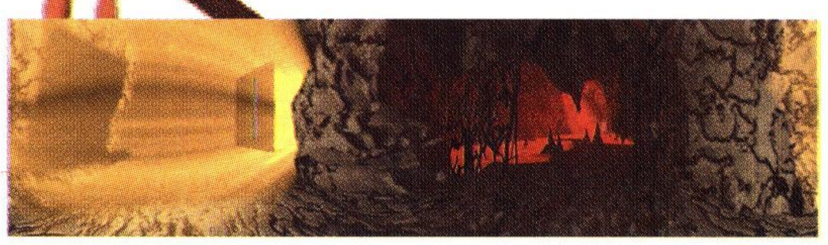


Although *ZTGI* may seem to be yet another of these interminable *Myst*-clones (all glossy graphics and no game), it's as far a cry from the ethereal nonsense of the Mac-loving favourite as Stan Collymore is from an effective strike force. Mainly it's fun. The intro is brilliantly edited and sets the style of the game perfectly, the performances throughout are flawless (including a welcome appearance from The A-Team's Dirk Benedict!) and the puzzles are well designed. Unlike a lot of adventures, you actually have to think about how to solve challenges.

I do have reservations about the control interface. I was never a really big fan of the 360°-panoramic control system in *Nemesis* and I'm still not sure I like it here. Also there isn't really any character interaction to speak of.

But because the rest of the game is so well designed you find yourself overlooking these points. *Zork: The Grand Inquisitor* is a welcome return to form. Z







(Above) It's okay, I'm only making a trunk call. Bwah hah hah ha ha ha, ahh... Oh please yourself. (Above right) The circus has come to town and *what* a bouncy castle they've got!

In Perspective

Zork Nemesis tried a little bit too hard to capitalise on the *Myst* phenomenon and in doing so lost much of the essential *Zork*ness in the process. *TGI* has realised this and gone about rectifying the situation extremely well. It's also a damn fine example of how to successfully design puzzles in an adventure game, allowing the player to actually think about what he's doing rather than simply by leaving him trying to guess what the programmer's answers are.

Zork Nemesis

Riven

Broken Sword II

Zork: The Grand Inquisitor

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse

Win 95 Only! | Network Play

Score

Good fun, good puzzles, good game.

88

Price: £39.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Activision

Telephone: 01895 456700

Website: www.activision.com

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PC GAMING WORLD says ★★★★★ PLAY IT

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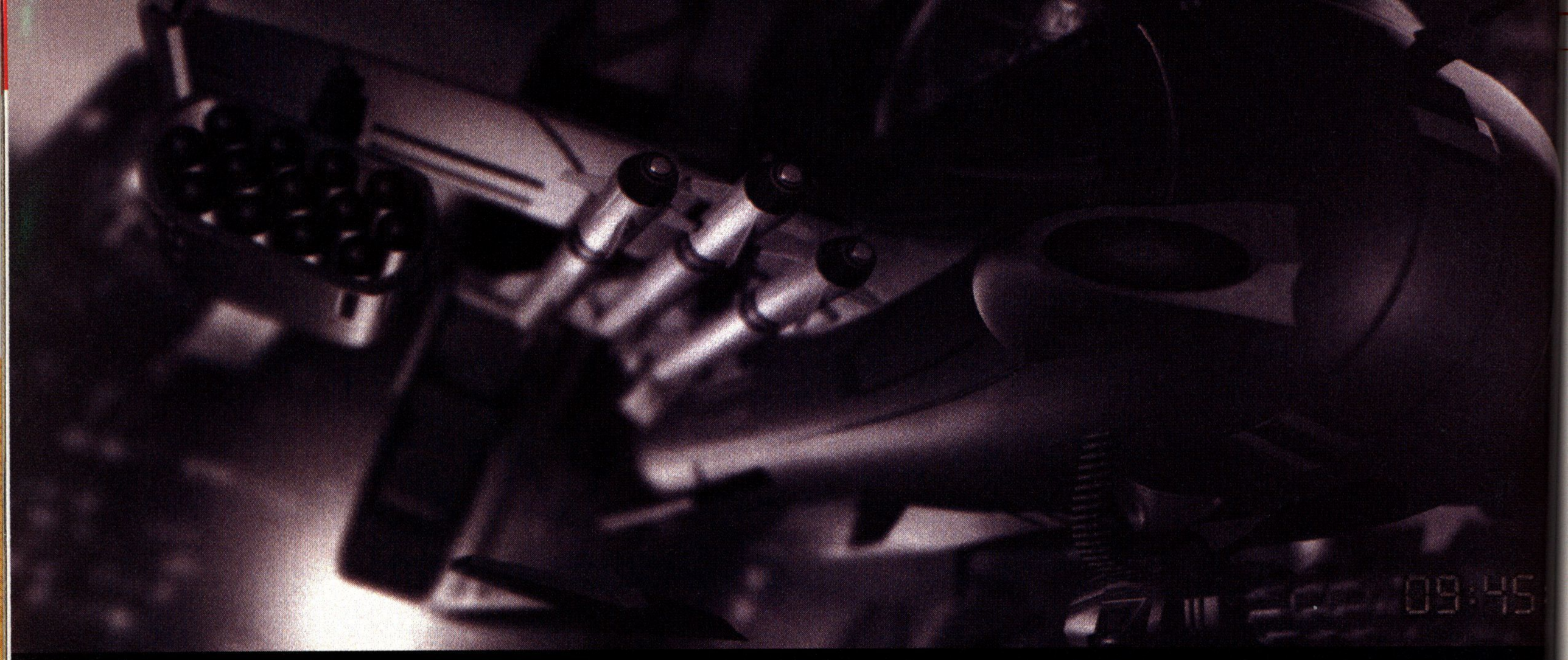
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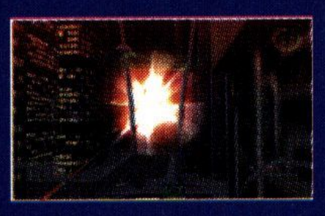


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ACCELERATOR ENHANCED GRAPHICS

PC CD ROM

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Joint Strike Fighter

PC ZONE Classic



Paul Presley's been waiting ages for a chance to show off his uncanny fluency in Norwegian. "Flyr en ny fly simulator," he said. "It would help if you could master plain English first," we replied.

THIS SHOULD BE INTERESTING. YOU'RE about to embark upon what is, for me, a unique review experience (assuming you bother to read to the end of the text and not just glance quickly at the score before moving on to Andy Martin's fine Worms 2 review). As I sit here typing these very words, I haven't actually decided on what score to give Joint Strike Fighter, the new flight sim to come winging its way from Norway (via Eidos).

As it stands right now, I'm fluctuating somewhere between an 88 score and a 92. And since it would seem that my words influence the nation's buying decisions (or so I'm told), bestowing a Classic award or a mere Recommended – even though we're only talking about a couple of points – can directly affect whether people actually buy the game. Heavy responsibility indeed.



So let us begin. Watch as I analyse the different elements of the game. Thrill as the score rises steadily then falls dramatically, before climbing once more. Put a stirring soundtrack on the hi-fi (maybe *Star Wars*, or possibly *Crimson Tide*) and it'll be all the more exciting. Probably.

Plump up the cushions

Well, I suppose the obvious starting point is the graphical quality. *Joint Strike Fighter* is indeed a lovely looking game. I haven't seen finer graphics in a flight sim since, well, the last one (the advent of 3Dfx is really making comments like those superfluous these days). *JSF* is particularly lovely though. The object detail is second to none, the planes are gloriously textured – and not just the main player either. For once in a flight sim, equal attention appears to have been paid to the rest of the airborne arsenal and everything looks as detailed as you can get outside of a real-life military base.

Extra credit must be paid to the terrain detail. The landscapes are superb. Rolling hills and sweeping valleys have never, er, rolled or sweeped any better. Early morning mist clings to the tree tops and bathes everything in the kind of beauty that was previously only known to television travel shows.

So, score-wise things are on the up. We've left the 80's zone and are now hovering somewhere around 90, possibly even leaning towards 91. Let's see how we fare with the actual gameplay though, shall we?

Ever since the riots took place, Bradford has taken on a much darker mood. Mind you, the Meals on Wheels service still gets through.

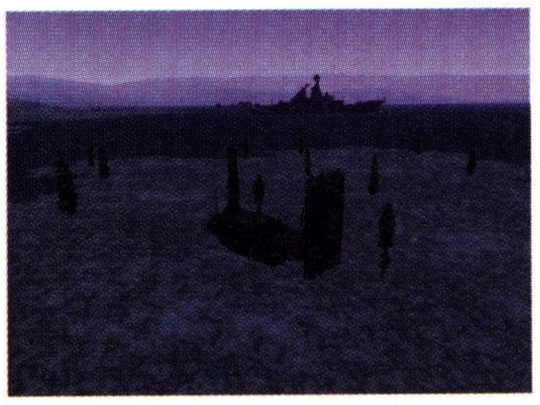
Yes – tell us about the gameplay!

Oh dear, there's a problem at the very start. I've watched the nicely presented video 'promos' for the *JSF* program that are supposed to familiarise the player with this previously unseen aircraft project, but I still don't really know all that much about the planes: notably how to fly them, how all the brand new stealth and weapons functions work and so on. Some kind of training scenario would appear to be the

(Below left to right) For once, ground and object detail hasn't been skimped on. Everything from oil tankers to mobile radar platforms looks as real as you get.





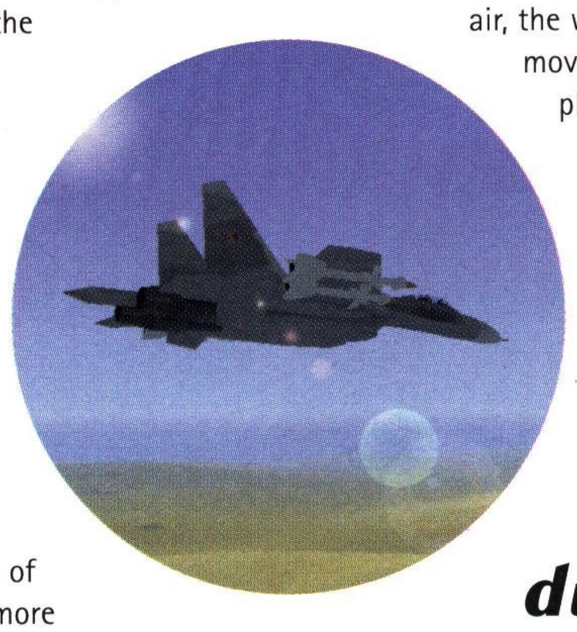




order of the day. After all, this is the first time anyone outside the charmingly named Skunkworks facility has ever had the chance to fly one of these superplanes. Surely we should be given a basic run down on how to go about it?

But no. You either have a 'quickstart' dogfight mode or the campaign settings. Afghanistan, Columbia, Korea or the Kola Peninsula are the exotic locales to blow up, but no Nevada Desert or similar. As Chris Searle might say, I've got to become a top pilot in the US Air Force, flying a brand new multi-million dollar fighter plane and I've got just six days to do so. Time to go *In At The Deep End.*

So the score has dropped back below 90 and appears to be falling. But wait, a lifeline. Despite the newcomer-unfriendly attitude, spending some time with the plane does reveal a noticeable fact – it's actually quite enjoyable to fly. Although a lot of the time I barely had a clue what half of the neon HUD symbology actually meant (I thought the DSS was a benefits service for the unemployed – why it kept flashing on and off above my altitude bar was a mystery), you do tend to pick up the basics quite easily.



The game still assumes a certain basic knowledge of the game genre on the part of the player though, and it's a shame that more wasn't made of the fact that this is the very first time that these planes have been simulated. But having said that, it feels very nice when you're in the air, and so it would be unfair to penalise it too harshly for that. And I can't praise it highly enough for including one feature that I've longed for in a flight sim for as long as I can remember: eject from your plane and you get to fly the parachute to the ground. Yes, actually fly it! Even better, when you've landed you can walk around with a gun and shoot things. It's not exactly *Tomb Raider* but it's fun. So the score is now cruising at a comfortable 89. Coffee and biscuits will be served by the cabin crew shortly.

Way-hey points!

Only one area left now. We've seen that *JSF* looks bloody lovely, and we've also heard that a lack of training scenarios is offset by a very playable engine. So it all comes down now to the campaigns. How well do the missions work?

It would be remiss of me not to say that the campaign interface itself is annoyingly fiddly. Not bad or lacking in detail, just cumbersome. It's also not quite as detailed as some other games – only cursory thought is given to wingmen for instance – and the unit icons are annoyingly cluttered in places (in fact they're very reminiscent of the old *Midwinter: Flames Of Freedom* icons). The score is dropping once again.

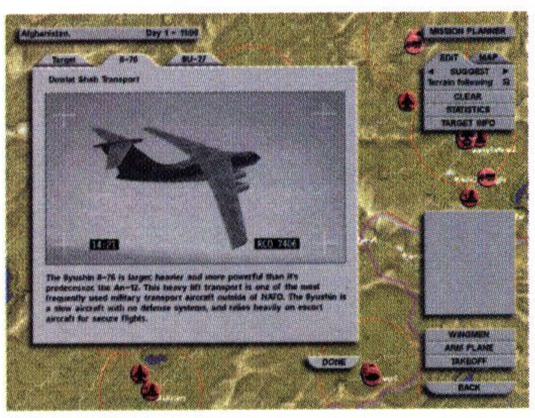
Oh no, disaster! It was all looking so good for *JSF*, but lo, it hath been felled by a final gutting blow. Or has it? Fortunately, salvation is to come, as in the true tradition of a Hollywood blockbuster, right at the end when things look at their bleakest. Despite my reservations about the actual campaign interface, the implementation of the missions and the world at large is first-rate. When you're in the air, the world really does feel alive. Convoys move from one town to the next, other planes fly along assigned mission routes – everything draws you in and keeps the atmosphere running high – and the score rising once more.

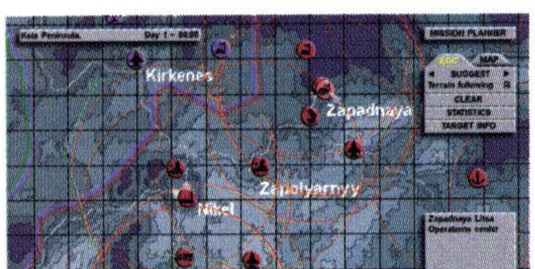
"Jet-heads should take to it like a duck takes to orange sauce."

So, the score?

A final flurry of goodness battling the malevolent forces of bad has given *JSF* hope once more. Flight sims traditionally score pretty highly, mainly because it's pretty hard to make a bad one, especially with the advent of 3Dfx allowing in-game graphics to look better than ever. But *JSF* needn't worry on that score; my only real reservation is that novice pilots will find it unfriendly. Long-term jet-heads will no doubt take to it like a duck takes to orange sauce, revelling in the challenge presented not only by the enemy forces but by the new and unfamiliar hardware.

There's one other blip on the radar screen – DID's *F-22 ADF*. Everything I've seen of this behemoth says that it will redefine the way we look at flight sims. The only weapon that *JSF* can really throw back at it is that it has a working campaign engine in the initial release. DID, take note. Z







(Top left) Briefing photographs are taken from in-game graphics to help you identify exactly what needs to be blown up. (Main) Flying in low over the Kola Peninsula. So much for the Cold War.

In Perspective

In the past half a year we've had one decent flight sim – Digital Integration's *F-16 Fighting Falcon*. The only real comparison to *JSF* – in terms of state-of-the-art-ness and physical quality – is DID's *EF2000*, which is still bloody good. Beware: DID's *F-22 ADF* is on the horizon and looks like toppling *everything* else.

Joint Strike Fighter

EF2000

F-16 Fighting Falcon

A-10 Cuba!

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90

Graphics: VGA/SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Joystick, keyboard, mouse



Score

Newcomers beware, but it really is bloody good.



Price: £39.99

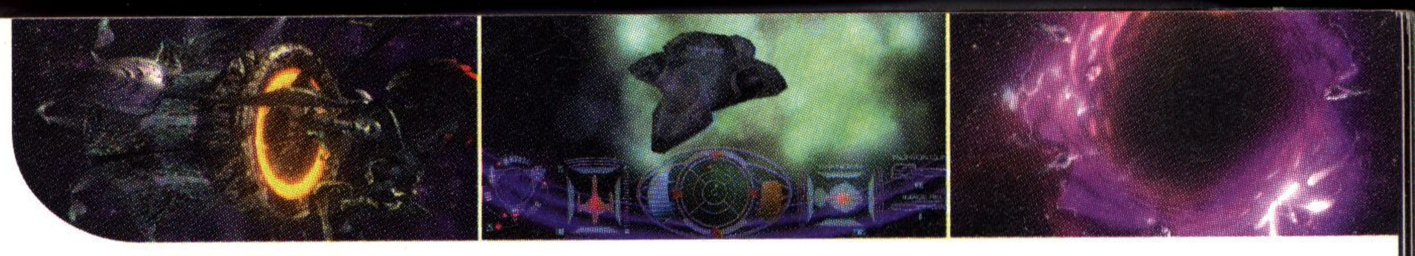
Release date: December

Publisher: Eidos Interactive

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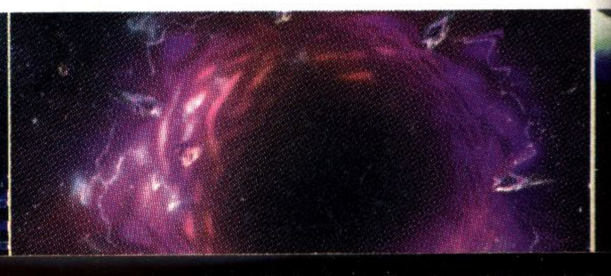


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Myth: The Fallen Lords





PC ZONE Recommended

It's a real-time strategy game. It's written by a team of Macintosh programmers. And it's actually not that bad. Is Jamie Cunningham all there?

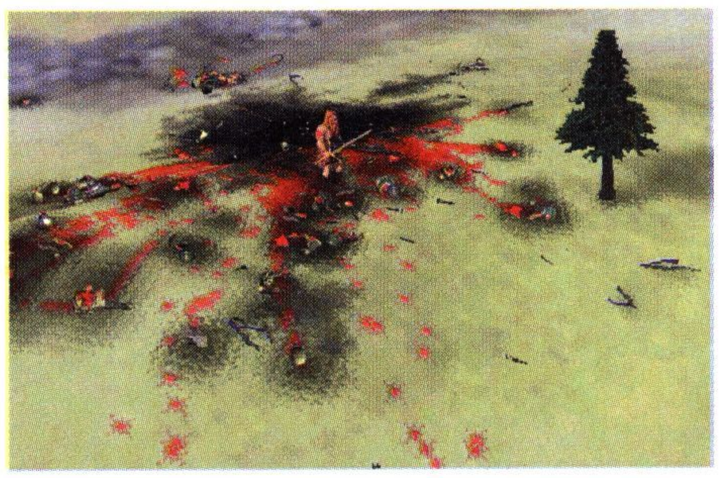
"Blow up an enemy unit and organs fly out and bounce off others – complete with shadows and splat noises."

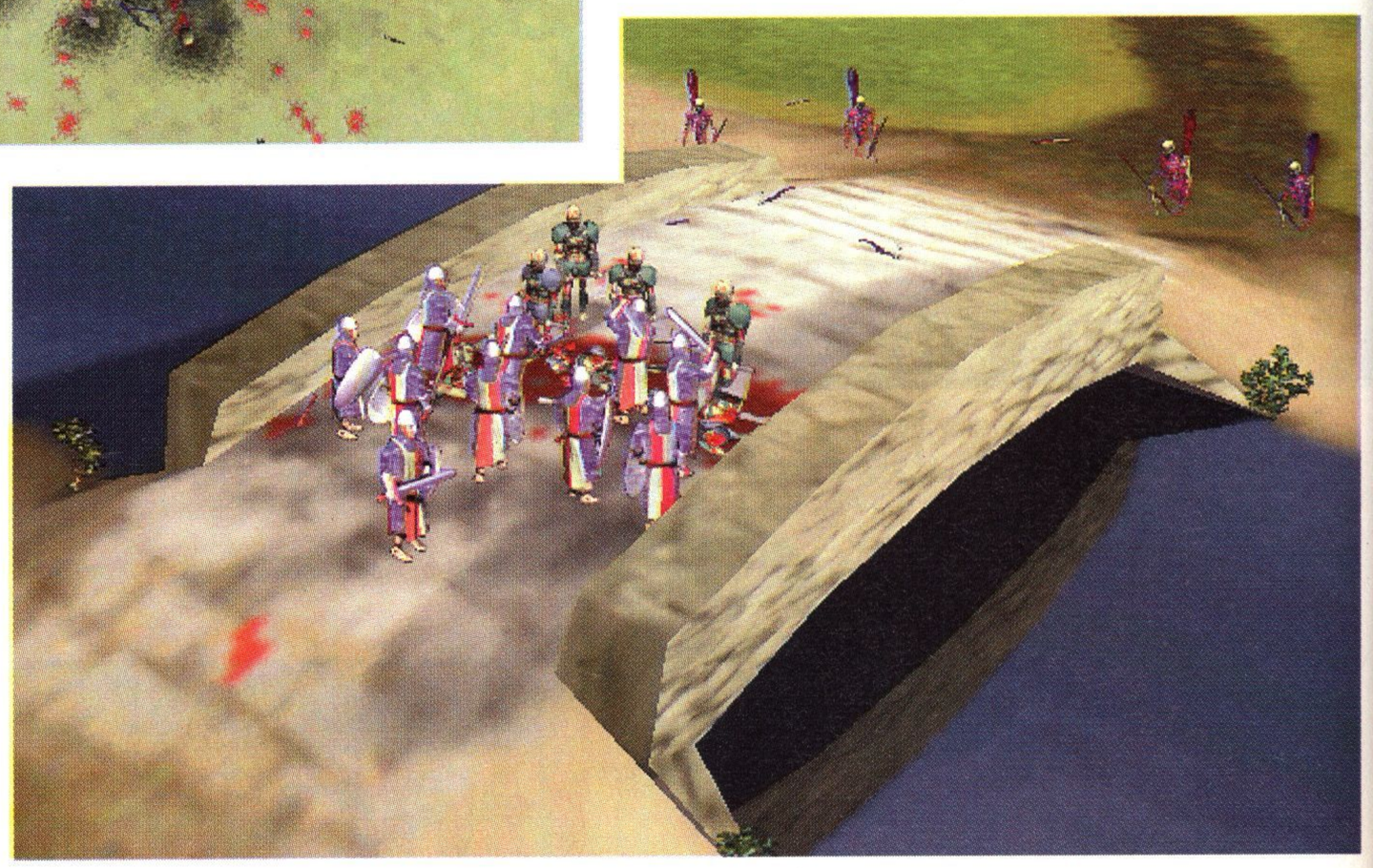
'VE BEEN THINKING, YOU KNOW, and I've come up with a revolutionary way to review software. It's called the Cunningham Algorithm™. It avoids the usual banter and describes games in a compact mathematical formula. In this case: Myth := ((Magic Carpet - Carpet) + Homicidal Maniacs) * Death.

Concise or what? Unfortunately, the Cunningham Algorithm™ doesn't pay very well, so for the time being you'll just have to bear with me while I run on for the next two pages. Ahem...

Myth is a multimetric real-time 3D strategy game for both Windows and Macintosh, and is capable of cross-platform network play. "Wake me up at the last paragraph," I hear you say. But hang on. What sets this game apart from all its 6,378,091 rivals is the way it plays. For instance, instead of looking down on the battlefield from above, you find yourself in one of those cool camera cranes that you get at *Noel's House Party* – you know, the ones where you can fly about and stick your face anywhere the action is. Zoom in, pan round and glide over the *Magic Carpet*-like landscape to check out the advancing enemy legions; pull back, rotate the camera through 360 degrees and see where they are in relation to your guys. Ridley Scott? He's got nothing on me.

Issuing your orders is just as effortless. Click on a single unit and direct him either to a new location or into battle with the enemy. Double-click and you'll highlight all similar units in the vicinity. You can also create hotkey groups, scatter them when they're under attack, withdraw them when they're losing and even rename them when you're bored. For die-hard tacticians, the game also includes ten formations that you can use to rearrange your armies. And you know what? It actually *works*. In no time at all you can have a vanguard of beserkers backed up by four box formations of warriors, two flanks of dwarves and a scattered line of archers raining death from the back row.





(Above) With a 3Dfx card, you find yourself looking at the scenery instead of the action. (Above left) I knew that vindaloo was up there somewhere...

Meet the characters

THE GOOD GUYS

WARRIOR



The mainstay of your army. Not fast, but a great fighter.

JOURNEYMAN



Fat bastard, heals troops. Wardrobe by Oxfam.

ARCHER DUDE



Archer who runs away at the first sign of trouble.

BERSERK



Beserk by name, beserk by nature. Very quick.

DWARF



Throws Molotov cocktails and sets off bombs.

THE BAD GUYS

THRALL



Walking dead, and very dense. Great for target practice.

TROW



Kicks his foe in the stomach until it splits open. Not nice.

MYRMIDONS



Carries knives. Can circumcise through chain mail.

SOULLESS



Hurls poison-tipped spears. Runs away when attacked.

GHÔLS



Weird thing that chucks bits of dead people about.

Real-time strategy, but not as we know it

Uniquely for this type of game, each one of the 25 maps sees you starting in the middle of the action: no sitting around for 20 minutes building factories, managing resources and worrying about how much money you haven't got. *Myth* picks you up, thrusts you into the middle of a ferocious brawl and leaves you to get on with it.

Although the game is hands-on, all your troops display a remarkable level of intelligence and can generally be relied upon to act on their own in a discerning manner. No more straying into the wilderness, taking on enemy divisions single-handed or walking backwards into a swamp. For those of you used to the imbecility of *Command & Conquer* – you'll be in for a shock.

Murder, death, explode

The game's designers wanted to create the most spoogesome 3D-world yet seen in a game of this type. For starters, the terrain is built on an electronic mesh so that the landscape



Kabooooooom!



"Hey lads, we're gonna need the border around this shot, otherwise we'll end up walking off the end of the Earth!"

can be changed dynamically. Set off a satchel bomb and watch the ground shake and ripple. Get your dwarves to lob their Molotov cocktails into a field and the grass turns black. Every part of scenery, from huge boulders to arrow heads, is tracked in 3D space. Which means that if you blow up an enemy unit, organs fly out and bounce off others – complete with shadows and splat noises.

The downside is...

Myth is let down by what can only be described as an overwhelming frustration whenever you play it for any length of time. So much attention has been paid to the technology that some of the fun element has suffered. When you start a new map you often find yourself hopelessly overwhelmed by the enemy forces, meaning there's no time for thinking – all you can do is pile in and hope you last the duration. Sure, instant action was one of the game's objectives, but at the expense of strategy and tactics? I think not.

Mind you, if you get fed up playing against the computer, you'll find various multi-player options which allow you to go head-to-head over a LAN or the Internet where, typically, real enjoyment is to be had. Play Capture the Flag, King of the Hill, or a severed heads rugby tournament. Access to Bungie's own server is free, so that looks as though it'll be the place to meet... and don't forget, this may be your last chance to kill Macintosh owners before they become extinct. Z

Spot the torso

Top news for violence fans is that all of *Myth's* characters come to bits like lepers in a hot tub. A single grenade from a dwarf's backpack is enough to crack open any unit and cover the local scenery in his intestinal glue. Not only that, but post-amputation body parts hang around for you to blow up some more – toss another grenade into the middle of a mound of flesh and watch everything spatter about. Very satisfying!



You want fries with that?

In Perspective

List all the real-time strategy games and this little bit of the page would explode onto your lap. So I won't. Instead I'll pick the cream and remind you that *Myth* is pretty much unique in the way it plays, which to my mind alone makes it worth a look.

Myth: The Fallen Lords

Total Annihilation

Dark Reign

C&C Red Alert

Warcraft II

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P133 recommended

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Mouse, keyboard



Score

Flawless engine, bodywork in need of slight attention.



Price: £39.99

Release date: January

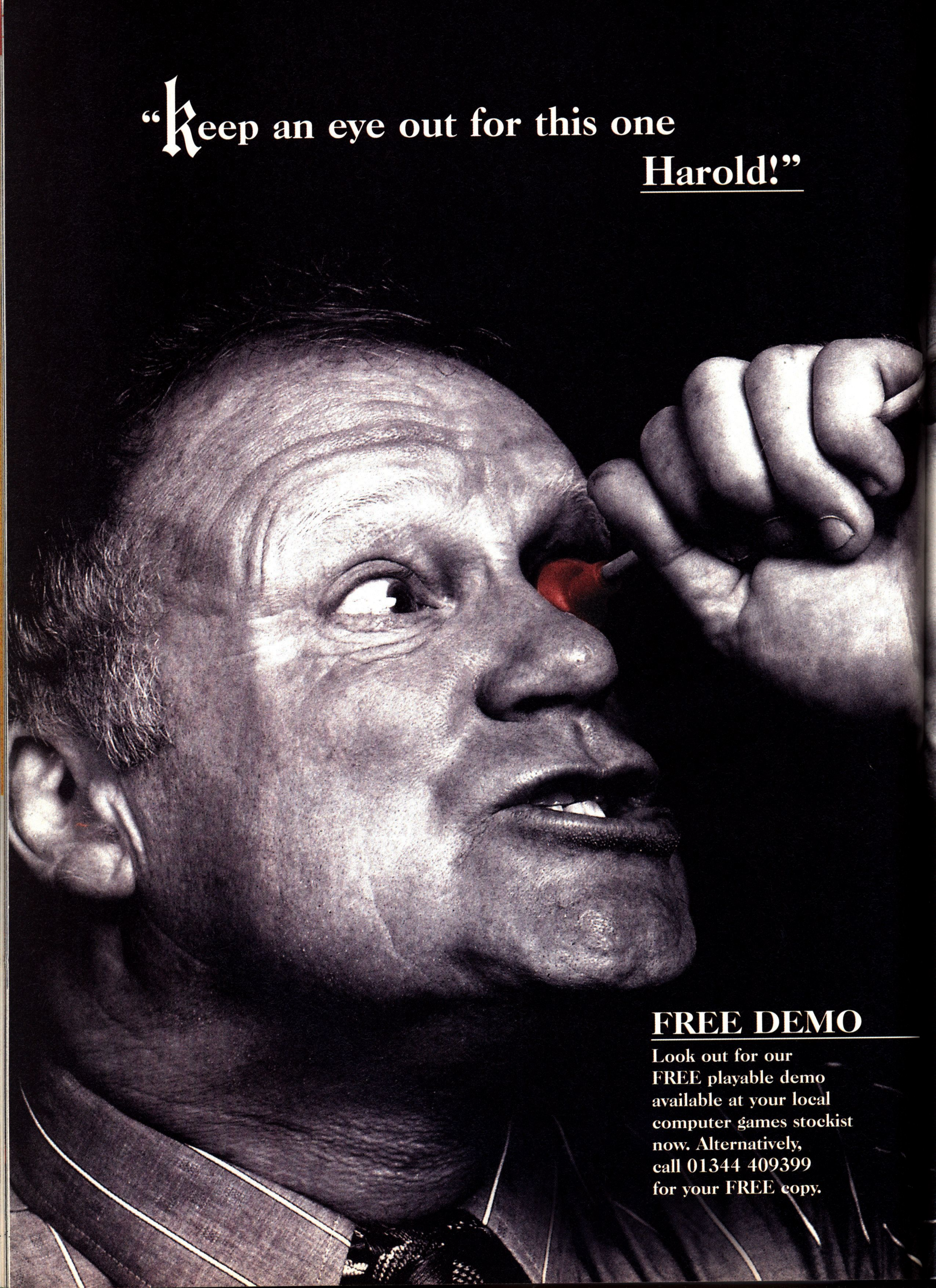
Publisher: Eidos/Bungie

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PC Zone Benelux



'Seven Kingdoms may earn the title of Civilization of the real-time strategy games' **The Adrenaline Vault**



'...not only managed to clench the throat (of Warcraft II) but...ripped out the heart and stamped on the guts as well'
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Overboard!

Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum. Charlie Brooker knows what to do with the drunken sailor: charge him fifty pence and show him the true meaning of the phrase 'Jolly Roger'.



All aboard, all aboard. Wo-ho-ho (repeat to fade).

AS YOU MAY HAVE GATHERED, OVERBOARD! is a game all about pirates. No, geekboy, not software pirates – we're talking about pirates of the old skool, cutlass-waving, "arr-har, me hearties" variety here. The ones who used to bob around on the high seas, singing off-colour songs about mermaids, drinking rum laced with their own urine, and of course boarding passing ships, gutting the occupants like fish, then nicking all their stuff. They all had names like Blackbeard, Bluebeard and Yellowbeard, but never names like Pink Moustache or Cyan Anal Hair. (Well, not that we are aware of) Their famous skull and crossbones motif could strike terror into the heart of even the stoutest seafarer, and today looks way cool on the side of a motorbike. Adam Ant used to dress up like one – a pirate, I mean. He never dressed up like a motorbike, although these days he'd probably wear anything if it would revive his flagging career. I digress.



Pirates, that's what *Overboard!* is concerned with. It's an action-cum-puzzle game in which you, Captain Spod, take command of a large pirate galleon and pilot it around a series of peril-packed levels. It makes sense that the pirates are of the old school variety, since the game itself is also decidedly retro in feel, like a 3Dfx remake of a long-forgotten Spectrum game.

Pieces of eight, film at eleven

Play *Overboard!* for a few minutes and you'll come away thinking "Is that *it*?" And the answer, essentially, is "yes". There really isn't much to it. It's all viewed from an overhead, slightly angled perspective (although a few other camera positions are available), and the controls are extremely simple: rotate left/right, move forward (there's no reverse because, hey, it's a *boat* yeah?) and fire (from port or starboard). The aim of the game is to traverse each level, blowing up enemy ships and taking over ports (by destroying their defences), with the occasional smuggling run or power-up tossed in to keep you happy. Rather than consisting of vast expanses of ocean, the levels are decidedly labyrinthine and claustrophobic – it's a bit like navigating a canal system designed by a blind man with an Etch-a-Sketch. And a small ruled pad. Furthermore, each stage is rammed to the hilt with plenty of typically old skool computer game hazards of yore: intermittent jets of flame, rotating buzzsaws, gun implacements, etc. You can't just go steaming in (especially since you don't have a steamboat). It's fiddly, time-consuming, and really rather toilsome. It's also strangely moreish. In the same way that shelling pistachio nuts can become more addictive than eating them, so finishing a given *Overboard!* level can rapidly become an obsession. Whether you're actually *enjoying* yourself during this time is a moot point. Think of it as a kind of non-edible snack. But not a rip-roaring excursion into hard-core gaming bliss. Wait for the budget release. Z



Boats and everything. Oh, the sea is so lovely and clear.

Tha' be multi-player

Overboard! thoughtfully includes a multi-player option which pits you and a friend against each other in a *Star Control 2* melee-style battle. Deceptively simple at first glance, it's actually pretty addictive, as the pair of you grapple one-on-one with a full complement of arms. It isn't as good as the aforementioned *SC2*, nor is it a patch on multi-player 'em ups like *Bomberman* or *Puzzle Bobble*. But it is *quite* good.

In Perspective

Overboard! is the second game this month with a top-down, retro feel to it. The other is the infinitely superior *GTA*, still. *Overboard!* also has much in common with *Star Control 2*, and that can never be a bad thing. Here's where we reckon it stands in the grand scheme of things:

Overboard!

Grand Theft Auto

Star Control

Atomic Bomberman

Doing the crossword on a Sunday

Stabbing a close friend in the eye during a psychotic episode

Listening to a Chris Rea album

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb
Processor: P90
Graphics: SVGA
Sound: All major sound cards
Controls: Keyboard/joypad

Score

Yo ho ho and a bottle of low-alcohol rum substitute.

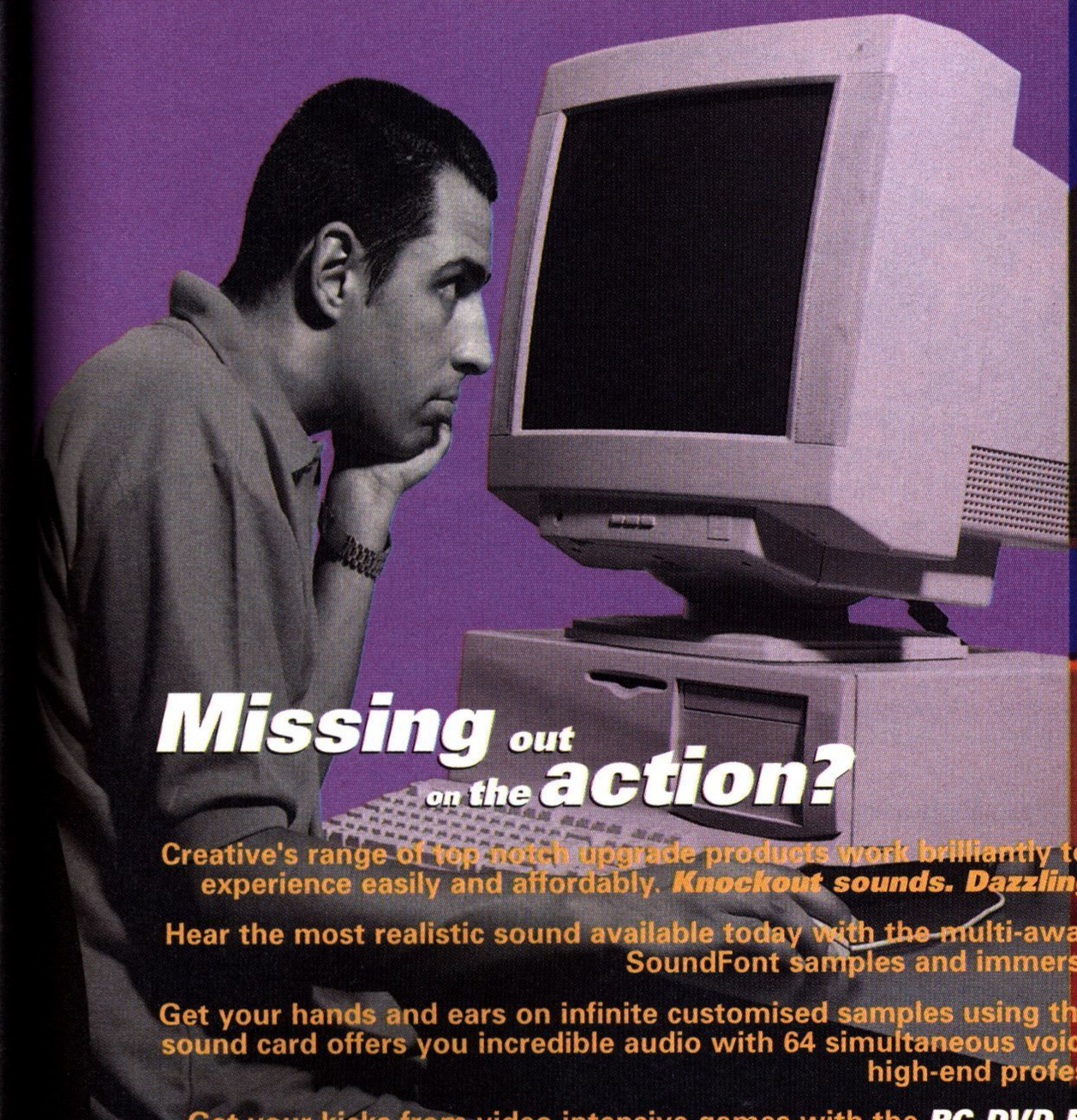
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Price: £39.99
Release date: November
Publisher: Psygnosis
Telephone: 0151 282 3000
Website: www.psygnosis.com

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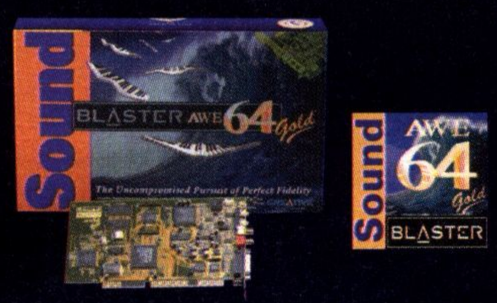
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Nuclear Strike



...or "*Nuclear Strike: The Sequel to Soviet Strike*" to give it its full title. John Davison looks to see if it's any better than its erstwhile predecessor.

SUCH A LONG-WINDED TITLE FOR THIS game is a bit pointless really – if EA wanted to be entirely accurate it should really be called Nuclear Strike: The Sequel to Soviet Strike. And Desert Strike. And Jungle Strike. And Urban Strike. There's a certain amount of lineage here, and all of the games in the series have been of a very high quality. Unfortunately though, one of the series' consistent downfalls has been that all of the games have been designed very much with consoles in mind. The playing style has always leaned towards using a joypad, and the mechanics have always been very 'console-y', if you know what I mean: 'play difficult mission, get password, play next difficult mission' as opposed to the PC approach of 'play a bit, save the game if there's a tricky part coming up, play a bit more, save... etc, etc.' Anyway, that's beside the point – is the latest one any good?

Well... yes. And no. For those of you unfamiliar with the *Strike* family the basic premise is this: you are a pilot with a fictitious Strike peacekeeping force, and your job is to fly a series of missions in a variety of locations destroying certain targets and picking up various people along the way. If you think along the lines of a 3D '90s version of *Choplifter* with more action you're probably barking up the right tree.

As technology stomps ever onwards though, we find that *Nuclear Strike* is very similar to all of its predecessors except that it has a) a different story – a loon called LeMonde has nicked a nuclear warhead and is trying to kick off a conflict in Korea; b) it has much better graphics throughout – the 3D terrain now uses the power of 3D acceleration using the latest version of Glide and boasts some stunning-looking levels; c) now you can fly more than just the chopper. Only *Urban Strike* contained numerous vehicles – this time round you get helicopters, hovercraft, jump jets and even a tank; d) the AI is better – the bad guys try and hide behind buildings, while the good guys attempt to get themselves into a position where you can help them, rather than just standing around waving while a tank with a gun the size of Cuba bears down on them; e) it's like *Soviet Strike*, but here the Strike 'team' is portrayed with fancy video footage. If MTV ever decided to employ a war correspondent, this is what the coverage would look like.

And the good news is...

On the whole it has to be said that this is very much a case of 'the same as last time – only a bit better'. It's a tactical, thinking man's shoot 'em up that requires a lot of patience and some delicate joypad prodding. There are many areas where it's a big improvement over past games – the map and radar configurations that help you negotiate your way through the missions are far more user-friendly, and a scope on the screen points you towards the items you've selected on the map, which is most welcome – previous incarnations had you jumping back and forth between the action and the map as you tried to work out where the bloody hell you were supposed to be going.

On top of this, the graphics are obviously lovely thanks to the 3Dfx support, but for what initially appears to be a fairly simple game it really does require one hell of a lot of processing grunt to run: on a P133 with 16Mb and a 3Dfx there was some serious slow-down when the action heated up. I have to say I enjoyed it though – there are games on the PC that might do a better job of satiating your desire for helicopter combat, but *Nuclear Strike*'s storyline and variety help pull it out from the crowd. Z







(Left) The buildings smash up into impressive flaming polygons. (Below) The terrain is almost photo-realistic in places – but you'll need 3Dfx to get the most from the game.

In Perspective

Nuclear is certainly the best *Strike* so far and has some considerable improvements over its predecessors. Basically, it's yet another tactical shoot 'em up with pretty visuals... something it shares with *G-Police*. It's definitely worth a look though – if you've got a ninjascopic PC with all the bells and whistles.

Nuclear Strike

Soviet Strike

Jungle Strike

G-Police

Tech Specs

Memory: 16Mb

Processor: P90

Graphics: SVGA

Sound: All major sound cards

Controls: Keyboard, joypad

Note: P90? Pah! Forget it... 16Mb? Pah! Forget it. You need at least a P133 with 32Mb for this to rock. And 3Dfx is essential.

Score

A souped-up console game.

82

Price: £39.99

Release date: Out now

Publisher: Electronic Arts

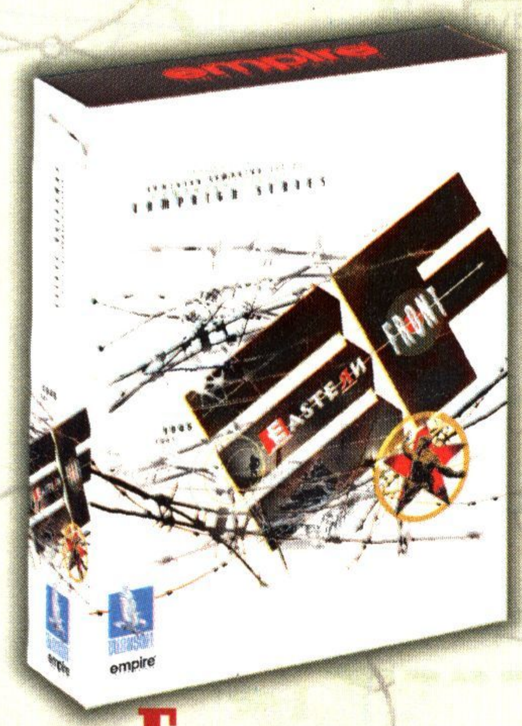
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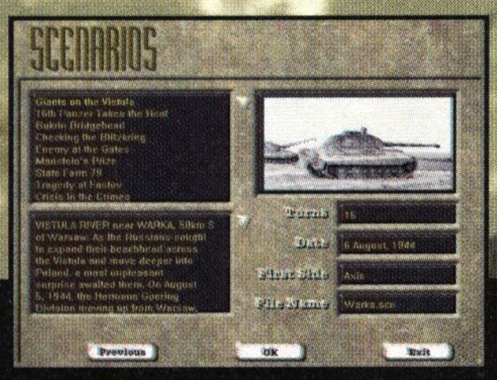
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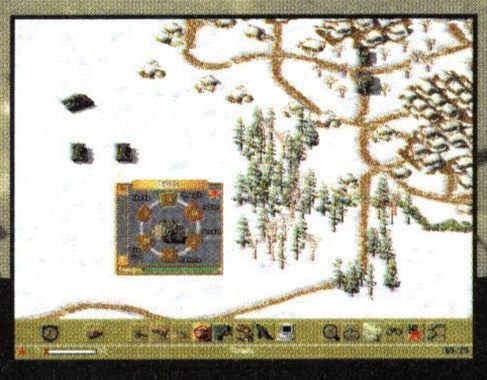
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Review ZONE Extra!

Once again these are the good games we've squeezed in at the very last minute, and the dross that simply didn't merit a full page review.



***Enemy Nations*: floundering in the flood of strategy games being released at the moment.**

ENEMY NATIONS

"Unlike any strategy game you've ever played." A bold statement, and easy prey for jaded reviewers eager to spoon out the eyeballs of anyone brandishing another real-time strategy game.

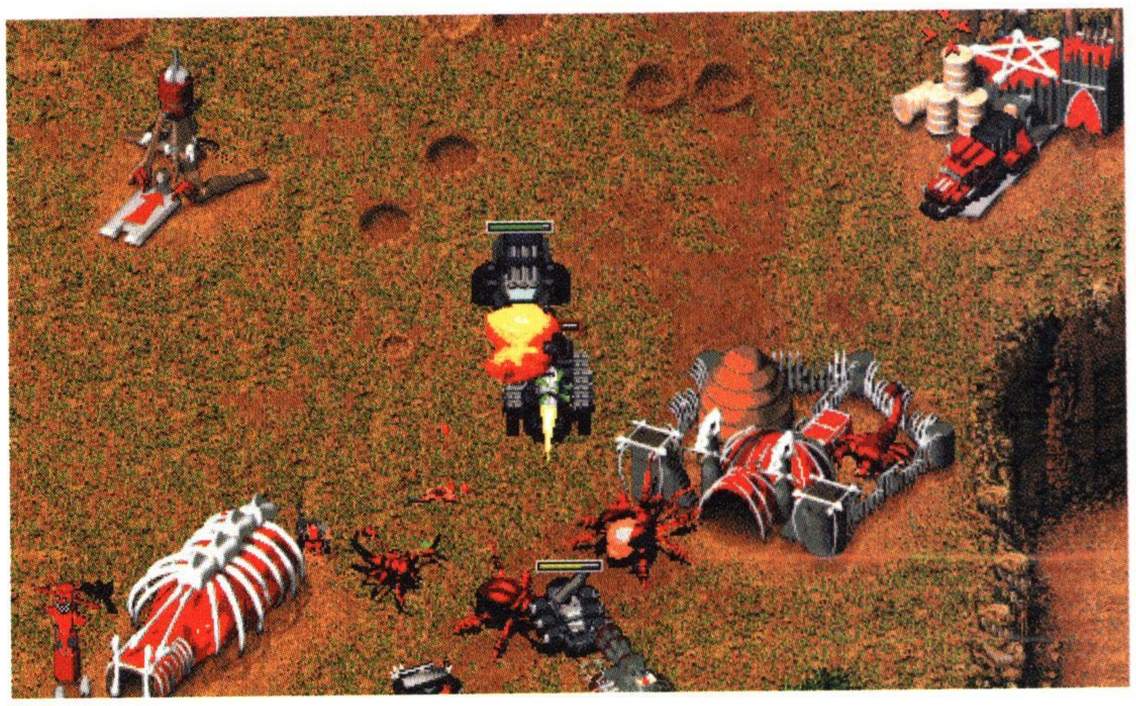
Enemy Nations is a build 'em up with combat tacked on for good measure. The idea is to collect gas, coal and timber and erect all the usual buildings, do a bit of friendly roaming and smack up anything that gets in your way. The build 'em up side of things is quite compelling, but the graphics for the various units let the game down. Detailed they may be, but tanks blend into trees (and each other) all too easily. They're messy and badly animated, and as a result the combat suffers badly.

You can choose from 12 different races and play over randomly generated terrain, so the game could take a while. You're better off opting for the multi-player mode than the single, and the control interface and AI work well. It's not bad, but don't believe what it says on the box. *Enemy Nations* is about as original as Bobby Davro is funny.

Richie Shoemaker

Publisher: Head Games (US)
Price: £19.99
Tel: (001) 612 645 2208

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***KKND X-Treme*: the graphics aren't that great, but newbies should enjoy it as it's not too difficult.**

KKND X-TREME

C&C's evil twin makes a reappearance after nine months, this time with 30 extra missions and a new 'Kaos' mode to liven the *C&C* Christmas party.

Unlike other clones, *KKND* failed to offer anything particularly new over *Red Alert*, and even this version could be seen as an unsubtle cash-in. The thing is though, *KKND* still stands up there with the best of them. Okay, so it doesn't have lovely 3D polygons or fabulous AI, but it does have some furious action, great units (though no new ones), and an antipodean tongue stuck firmly in cheek.

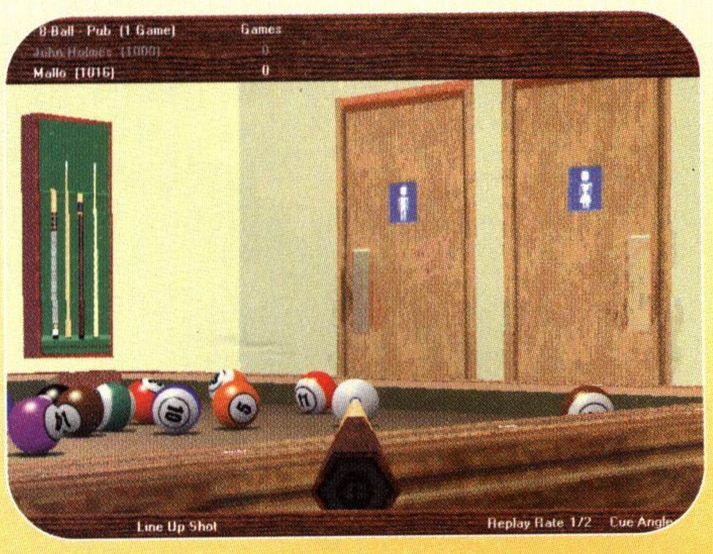
The Kaos mode allows single players to play multi-player style games and the AI's been tweaked (though not by much). It's not as deep as *Dark Reign*, nor as thigh-strokingly sexy as *Total Annihilation*, but with 60 missions in total, *KKND X-Treme* is sure to keep newcomers going for quite a while. Great fun if you just want something simple – and enjoyable enough in its own right for those who already own a copy of *KKND*.

Richie Shoemaker

Publisher: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99
Tel: 01753 549 442

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PC Zone recommends



VIRTUAL POOL 2

PC ZONE Classic

Pool: a game enjoyed by piss-heads the world over. The US, UK, from Brazil to Australia – wherever there's a watering hole, you'll no doubt find a table.

Interplay's original *Virtual Pool* was a bit of a godsend for those of us that didn't drink, or didn't get to practise their game as often as they would like – the pool action was so good it actually helped improve your real game (with sighting and angles at least). Exactly the same could be said about the sequel: the physics and graphics are now *so* good you sometimes forget you're watching a computer game.

The mouse-driven cue action is pretty much the same as before (although you can now raise the cue butt to apply some serious spin), but there are a number of other new additions that really make it more of a gamesplaying investment this time around. First, and most importantly, is the introduction of English pub rules into the game. Secondly, the ball can now bounce – which means it's easier to twat sky-high when you try and pull off one of those dead suave 'bendy' shots that impress your mates when you're drunk.

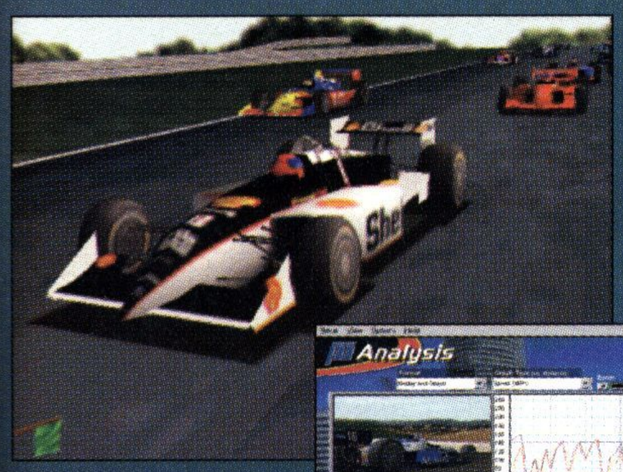
And there are loads of other extras too, including a smorgasbord of multi-player options (with minimum lag Internet play which works really well – although convincing Yanks to play eight-ball English pub pool is sometimes more challenging than the game itself), and some new backgrounds… plus the odd niggle (the new backgrounds are crap, the game can slow down quite a bit without 3Dfx acceleration, and – most annoyingly – everyone's forced to watch a long and boring Interplay trailer before the installation process begins), but overall the inner workings of *Virtual Pool 2* are pretty much faultless and, as the basis of an accurate pool simulator, come highly recommended.

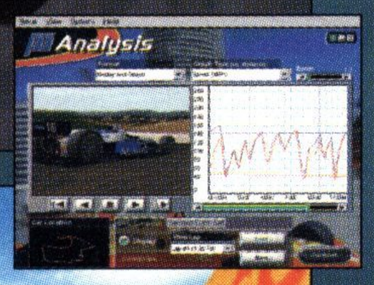
Paul Mallinson

Publisher: Interplay
Price: £29.99
Tel: 01628 423 666

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www.microsoft.com/uk/gameszone/

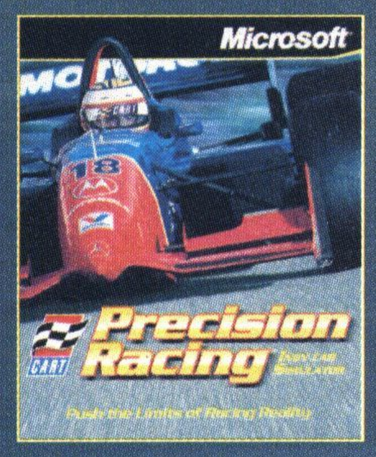








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***Postal*: only the Yanks would be inspired by postal workers, even if they've left their mail bags behind so that they can rampage and shoot everything in sight.**

POSTAL

Postal has taken a while to reach us, having gone through several name changes. Starting off as *Postal*, it was then renamed *Loose Cannon* before reverting back to its original title. The title actually relates to the American phenomenon where US Postal workers who've been fired return to work to do a bit of firing of their own – usually in their co-workers' faces.

It's more of an urban *Smash TV* than a *Syndicate* clone, but not as polished. You simply move your character around the screen, with your finger on the trigger, spraying your environs with a hail of fire until the foes get in range – you hit them, they die or explode. Aiming is easy and you can get away with misjudging because the standard gun has unlimited ammunition.

Loosely borrowing single and multi-player ideas from *Quake*, ten weapons are available and you can duck and strafe to avoid enemy attack. It could have been a good game, but it loses marks simply because of the grossly gratuitous violence and uninspiring level design. Ultimately it's just too samey. You shoot anything that moves; unarmed pedestrians run about and get caught in the crossfire; there are lots of big explosions; you finish the level and then go and do it all again.

Although *Postal* delivers on the odd occasion, it doesn't quite push the envelope through the right box.

Lee Hyde

Publisher: Take 2 Software
Price: £34.99
Tel: 01753 854 444

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DAYTONA USA DELUXE

A mainstay of vulgar arcades and the occasional motorway service station, *Daytona* is generally regarded as a half-decent driving game – but that said, something seems to have been left out during the conversion from arcade to PC.

All the ingredients are in place, but unfortunately they appear to have been put together by Helen Keller. A selection of courses are available, as is a choice of vehicle, although the cars have names more suited to Gladiators; Wolf, Oriole and Balance springing unwittingly to mind.

Following the standard cry of 'Gentlemen start your engines' a rolling start eases the driver into the race. It's a natural assumption that high-powered cars tearing round a track can achieve some kind of speed, but in *Daytona USA Deluxe* the sensation just isn't realised – the cars plod round as though they've got Sunday drivers at the wheel. This gives you plenty of time to peruse the scenery, which again isn't up to much: generally, the graphics are reminiscent of the old *Roobarb And Custard* cartoons, wobbling around in a comedy fashion.

Sega have yet to make use of the 3D acceleration revolution, and until they do, simply porting their games over to the PC isn't enough. To be this bad doesn't take ages.

Steve Hill

Publisher: Sega PC
Price: £44.99
Tel: 0181 995 3399

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***Daytona USA Deluxe*: hey, it looks like someone's given Wolf a bit of a battering. Excellent!**

MONOPOLY STAR WARS EDITION

You should already know what this is all about from the game's name. Yes, it's *Monopoly* in the *Star Wars* universe. The car, boat, dog et al have been replaced by the likes of Luke, Leia and Chewbacca, while the Old Kent Road, Angel Islington and so on have been usurped by Hoth, Endor and other trilogy locations. Anthony Daniels has even been persuaded to take time out from his hectic schedule to resume his role as the voice of C-3PO, to suitably irritating effect.

Everyone but everyone must have played *Monopoly* at some time in their life, trying to amass money, hotels and avoid going to jail – it's a fantastic game that provides a solid grounding in the basic life skills of greed and selfishness. *Star Wars* on the other hand is a majestic film that enables vast legions of grown men to cling desperately to their childhood.

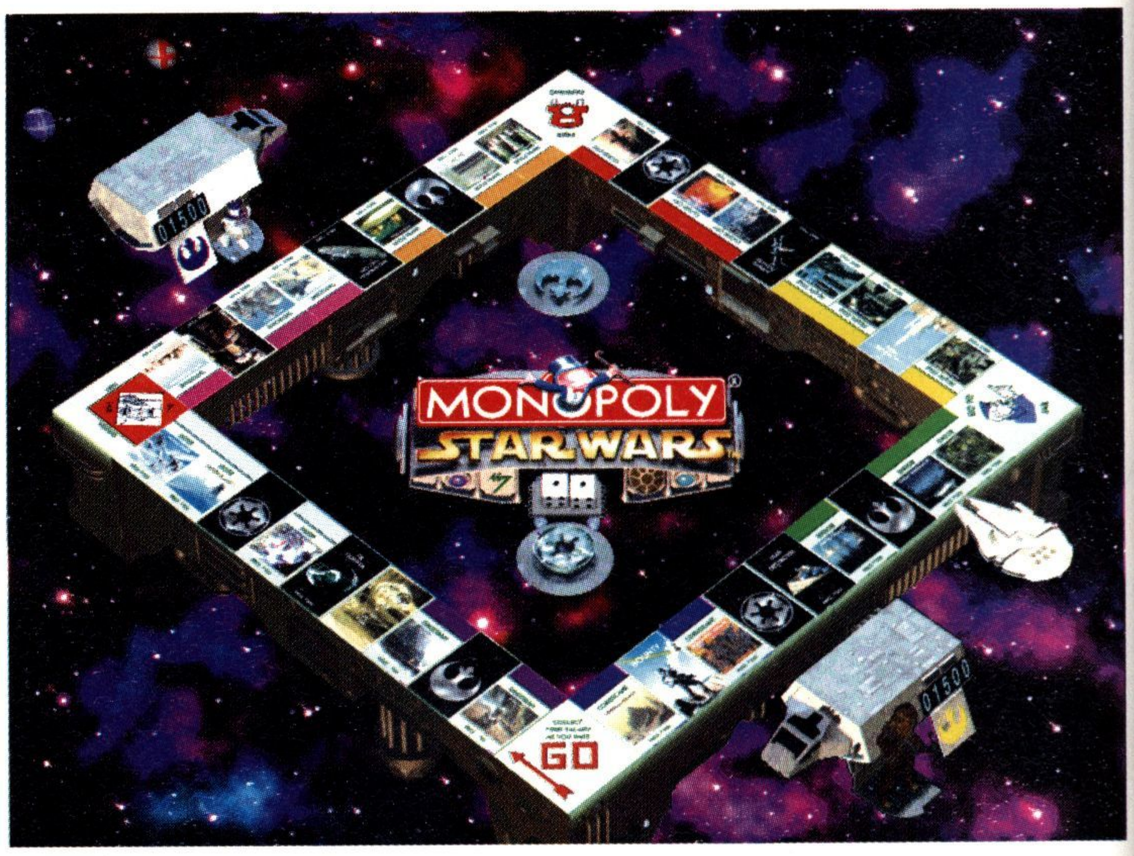
But there are some things that just shouldn't be messed with. It's nothing short of ludicrous to combine two cultural classics as these: the two together are as incongruous as pork-flavoured ice cream or a goth on a bouncy castle.

Monopoly should be played on a hot summer's day with the thick kids from down the road, while *Star Wars* should be watched in a darkened room with a crew of your best mates and a truckload of popcorn. Here justice isn't done to either *Monopoly* or *Star Wars*, and whatever the merits or otherwise of board game conversions this is symptomatic of a world gone mad. What next? *Battlestar Galactica Cluedo*, anyone?

Steve Hill

Publisher: Hasbro Interactive
Price: £39.99
Tel: 0181 569 1234

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***Monopoly Star Wars Edition*: not really recommended unless you're so fanatical that you can't live without every bit of *Star Wars* paraphernalia ever made.**

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Budget ZONE

You know your PC's getting on a bit when you see the towers of new releases in HMV and hope that your 486 can handle three-year-old games. Fear not – some of our highest-rated titles should be out on budget by Christmas and many of them will chug along satisfactorily on a 486. They may not be cutting edge, but they still beat some of today's 3D accelerated airheads. Welcome to the cheap seats...



Buy *Quake* on budget and explore all the total conversions available.

ACTION

Unless the real world is as alien to you as Jo Brand's nether regions, you'll know by now that *Quake* is available on budget – buy it now and have a good look at all the extras you can bolt onto it. But if you're sick of the sight of *Quake* then maybe *Duke Nukem* will satisfy your thirst for 3D action. What's more, like *Quake*, *Duke* has its own band of followers hidden in dark and shady corners of the Internet offering all sorts of new and exciting levels for you to download.

If you'd rather submerse yourself in the *Star Wars* universe, pick up a copy of the *TIE Fighter Collectors CD*, a space combat sim that has you gunning for the Dark Side. It fares very well even against today's high standards and although it's a tad difficult, it plays well and looks fantastic.

MechWarrior 2 and *EarthSiege 2* are the best robot combat sims available at the moment and it's a pretty close call as to which one comes out on top.

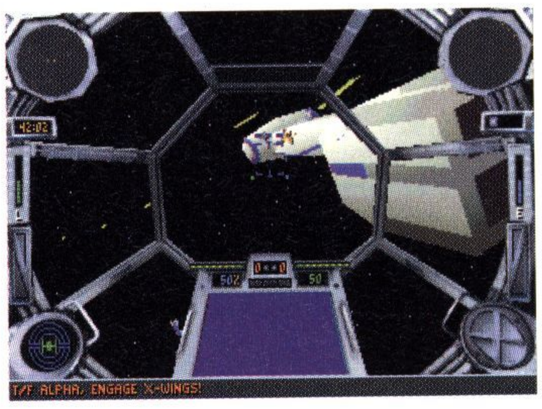
Some say *MechWarrior 2* is the best, but we couldn't possibly comment. Either buy both or flip a coin.

Best Buys:
- Quake (RePlay £14.99)
- Duke Nukem 3D (Kixx £12.99)
- TIE Fighter CD (White Label £12.99)
- MechWarrior 2 (Essential £9.99)
- EarthSiege 2 (Sierra £9.99)
- Fade To Black (EA Classics £11.99)
- Crusader (EA Classics £11.99)
- Magic Carpet 2 (EA Classics £11.99)
- Dark Forces (White Label £12.99)

DRIVING

Micro Machines 2 is best described as top-down racing in the Land of the Giants. It's great fun, mighty fast and has a cool track designer chucked in for good measure. *Network Q RAC Rally* is still one of the most playable driving games with plenty of options and a great atmosphere. If you're not careful though, it can be all too easy to wrap your flash-looking car round that nasty tree – which will serve you right really for showing off...

Alternatively, there's *Destruction Derby*, the poor man's *Carmageddon*. It doesn't have the blood of the latter and there's nobody to mince up in a gruesome fashion, but it's great for simple two-handed tension relief. If you fancy something a little more accurate, then jump into the sweaty cockpit of an IndyCar. Acknowledged as being better and more attractive than its VGA predecessor, *IndyCar Racing 2* isn't quite as groovy as *F1GP2* but it's the best driving sim for a tenner.



The classic *TIE Fighter* still rocks!

Best Buys:
- Micro Machines 2 (Codemasters £TBA)
- RAC Rally (Europress £9.99)
- Destruction Derby (Psygnosis £9.99)
- IndyCar Racing 2 (Sierra £9.99)
- Big Red Racing (Kixx £9.99)
- Screamer (White Label £9.99)

SPORTS

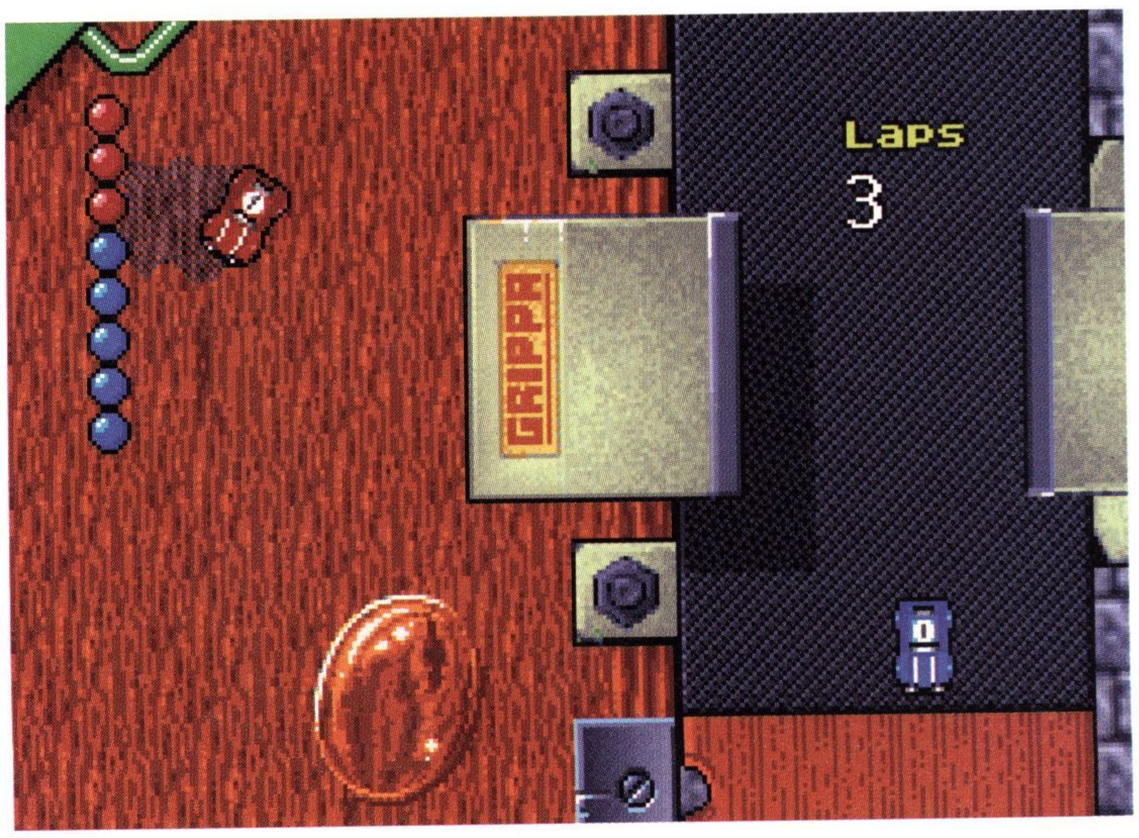
Anyone familiar with *PC Zone* will know how much we (by 'we' we really mean our Editor Jeremy) love *Championship Manager 2*. The new super-enhanced version may be in the shops right now, but this one's much better value if you don't mind it being a smidgen out of date. Gremlin's *Actua Soccer* is definitely the best-looking of the 3D soccer games on offer and still remains extremely playable. But having said that, it isn't quite as playable as *Sensible World of Soccer* – a pig-ugly game which will have you making up new swear words every fifteen seconds. Beware though, it's unplayable on anything more than a P90.

Apart from football, Electronic Arts seem to have all other sports games sewn up tighter than Jimmy Somerville's pants. If in doubt, go for something in the EA Sports range.

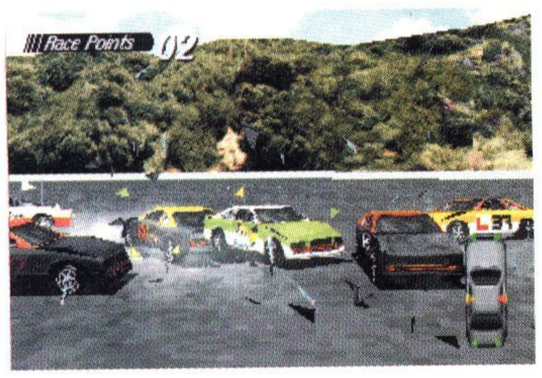
Best Buys
- Actua Soccer (Gremlin £9.99)
- CM2 (Kixx £12.99)
- Sensible Soccer (White Label £12.99)
- NHL 96 (EA Classics £11.99)
- PGA Tour 486 (EA Classics £11.99)



Despite its faults *Actua*'s still one of the PC's best footie sims.



Hours of mini-motoring enjoyment at a nice price with *Micro Machines 2*.

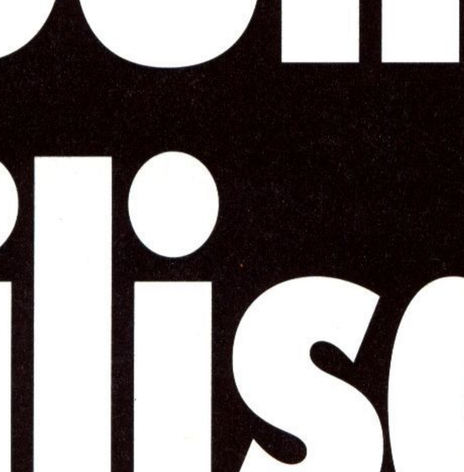


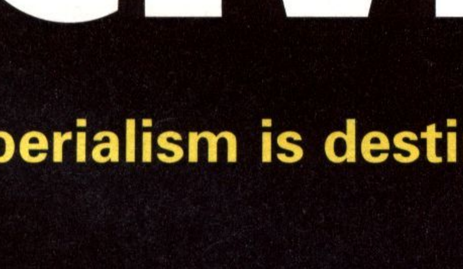
***Destruction Derby*: okay, so it's not *Carmageddon*, but hey it's cheap.**

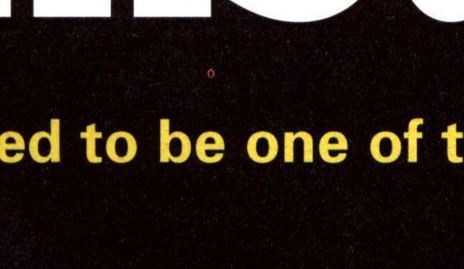
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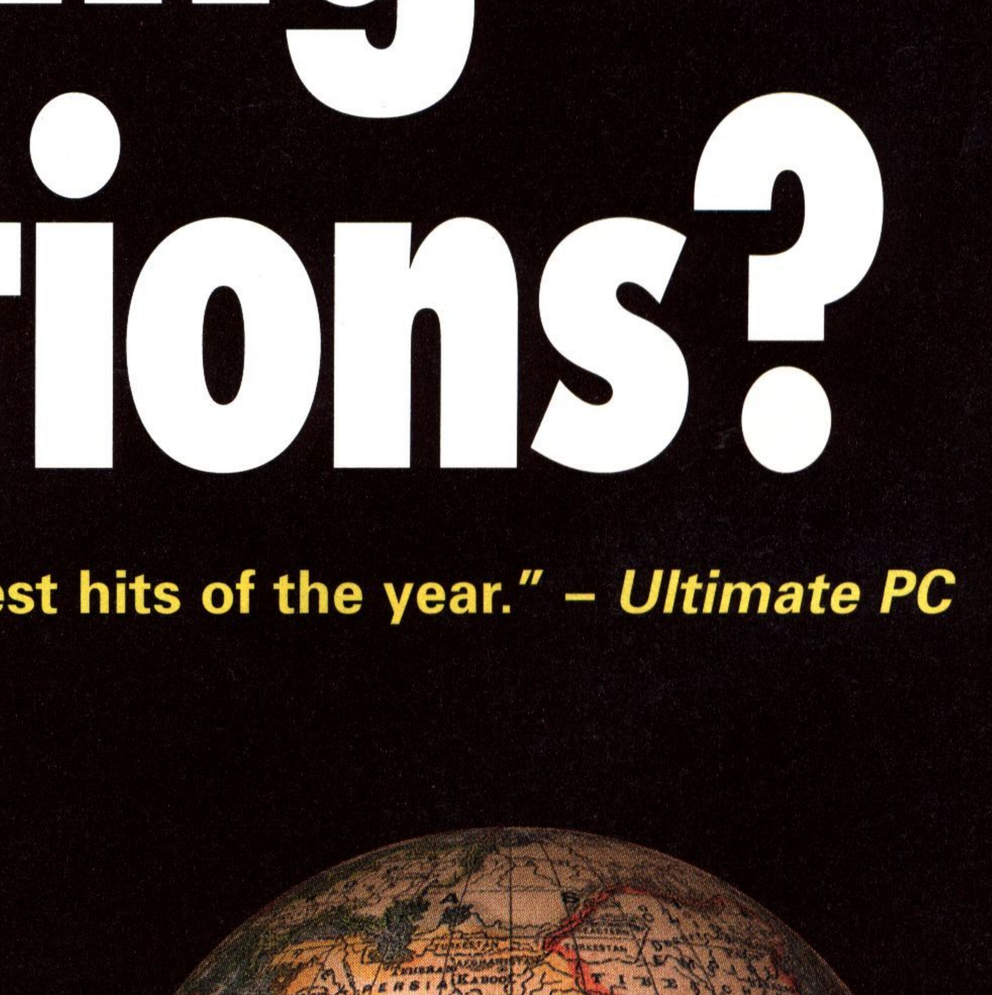
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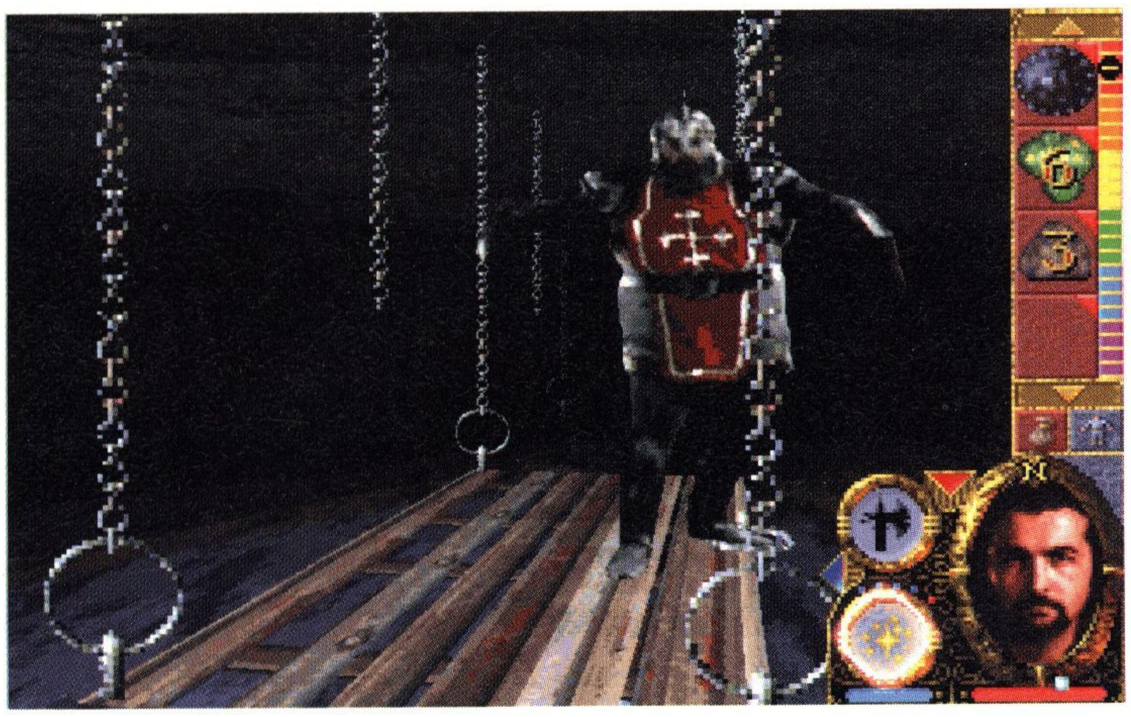
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Whet your appetite for much talked of *LOL2* by playing its predecessor on the cheap.

RPG

It's pretty simple really – choose a game with 'Ultima' in the title and you won't go far wrong. *Ultima VIII* will keep you awake for a few nights with its engaging storyline and wealth of character interaction.

Best Buys
Ultima VIII (EA Classics £11.99)
Lands Of Lore (White Label £14.99)
Betrayal At Krondor (Sierra £9.99)

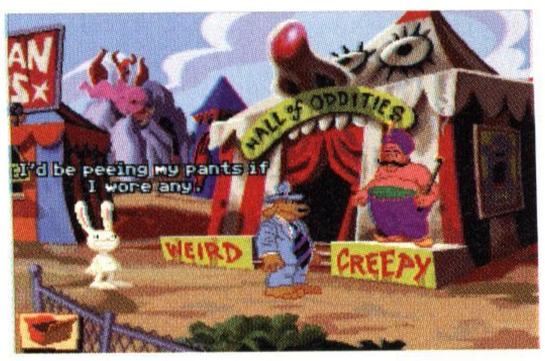
ADVENTURE

Sam & Max Hit The Road is still one of the funniest and best all-round point-and-click adventures on the market, and now it makes half of an agreeable double act because Virgin have bundled it with *Day Of The Tentacle*. For bizarre archaeological goings-on, check out *The Dig*, a cunning space adventure created by the God-like hand of Stevie Spielberg.

Star Trek: A Final Unity was the first of the *Star Trek* games to weigh in as half decent, and even if you think that all the cast should die a horrible death you'll find plenty to do before you burn your copy in a ritual act of genre destruction.

Best Buys
Sam & Max Hit The Road/
Day Of The Tentacle (VIE £14.99)
The Dig (VIE £12.99)
Star Trek (MicroProse £9.99)
Discworld (Psygnosis £9.99)
Monkey Island 1 & 2 (VIE £14.99)
LBA (EA Classics £11.99)
Ecstatica (Psygnosis £12.99)
Full Throttle (VIE £12.99)

***Sam & Max Hit The Road* is still one of the best adventures around.**





***Ultima VIII* – an absolute must-have for all role-playing game fans.**

FLIGHT SIMS

It may be more action than sim, but *Top Gun* has clearly earned its status as a top game, especially as Hollywood's dwarven heart throb is nowhere to be seen. *Navy Strike*, set in the near future, brought some much-needed



***Flight Unlimited*: no guns but good graphics and er, some planes.**

strategy to this party-like gathering as well as a cracking good flight engine. *A-10 Cuba!* has just been released on budget and although the graphics are a little bit dodgy by today's demanding standards, it still manages to suck you in with its faultless gameplay. *Flight Unlimited* put the willies up Microsoft when it first popped out and remains the best no-guns flying sim available in this price range.

That's not forgetting *PC Zone*'s highest scoring game ever, *EF2000*. On budget, this EuroFighter flight sim justifiably earns the right to be top banana of the bunch, available with the add-on pack and Windows 95 accessibility already built in.

Best Buys
Super EF2000 (Hit Squad £14.99)
Flight Unlimited (White Label £9.99)
Navy Strike (White Label £12.99)
Top Gun (MicroProse £9.99)
A10 Cuba! (Activision £9.99)
Comanche 2.0 (EA Classics £11.99)
US Navy Fighters (EA Classics £11.99)
Dawn Patrol (White Label £9.99)

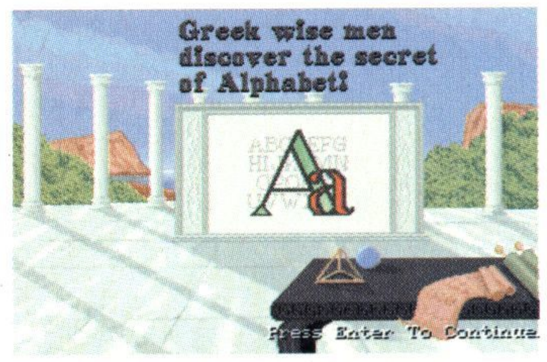
STRATEGY

Whacked mercilessly at birth with an ugly stick, *Civilization* was one of the first truly great strategy games. Its sequel is visually more impressive but is essentially the same empire building epoch-spanning game. Bullfrog have unleashed a couple of beefy whoppers in their day, and two of the best have to be *Theme Park* and *Syndicate*, the latter being an impressive real-time action game whose younger brother *Syndicate Wars* should be with us on budget in the new year.

If it's cheap *C&C*-style strategy you're after, you should make an energetic dash for *Z*, which should bridge the gap until Virgin churn out Westwood's original.

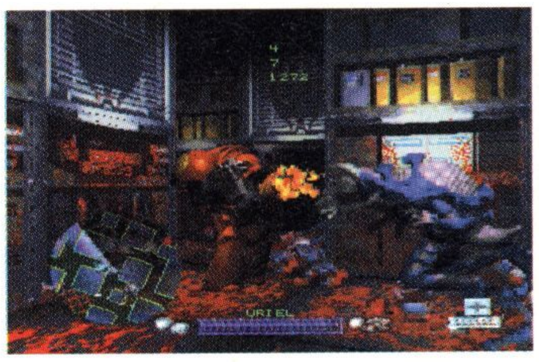
We just couldn't end this section without mentioning the Chris-tastic *X-COM*, of which you probably know too much already. Our Dep Ed's had to put up with endless amounts of ribbing about being so addicted that he's lost girlfriends over it, so there you go – we mentioned it.

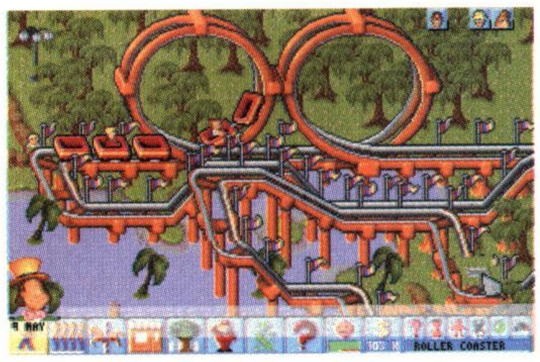
Best Buys
Z (White Label £9.99)
Civilization (MicroProse £9.99)
Theme Park (EA Classics £11.99)
Syndicate (EA Classics £11.99)
X-COM (MicroProse £12.99)
Space Hulk (EA Classics £11.99)











(Top) Want a strategy game and can't decide which one? Buy a copy of *X-COM* and you can't go wrong.



The arcade action in *Top Gun* makes a nice change from heavy duty flight sims.

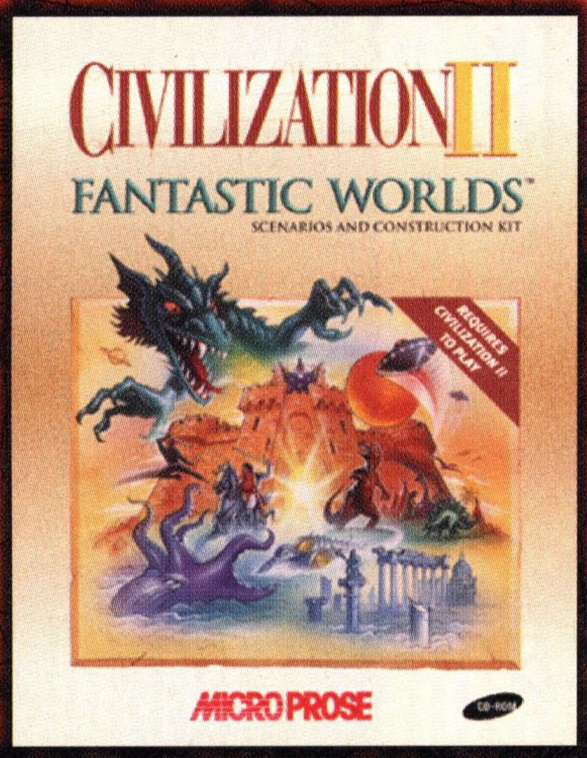
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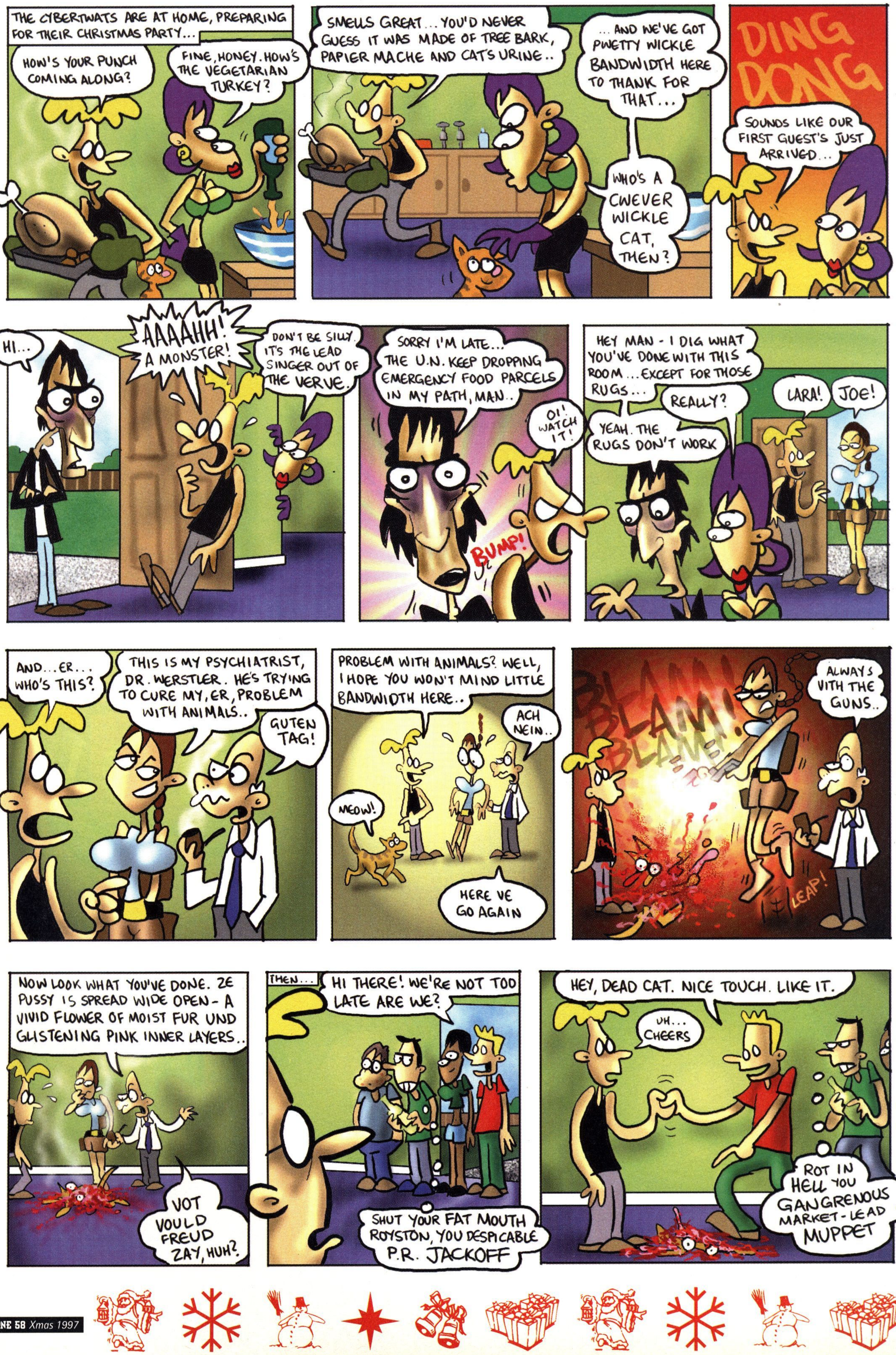
CD-ROM

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www.microprose.com

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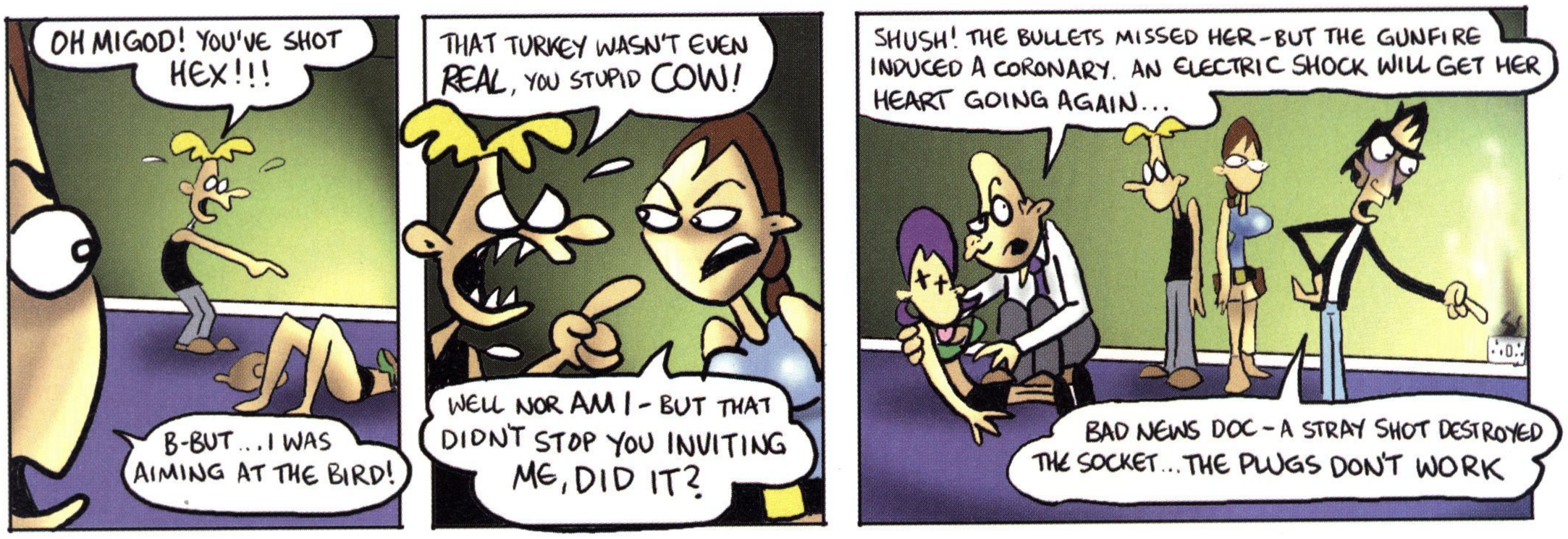
the cybertwats Christmas Special



By Charlie Brooker









the end...

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A mega-powerful PC!

BLUE BYTE ARE SO KEEN FOR YOU TO EXPERIENCE THE delights of *Incubation*, their highly-accomplished new strategy game, that they're giving away a mega PC and a copy of *Incubation* to play on it. We gave *Incubation* a massive score of 94 in our November issue making it one of the highest-scoring strategy games we've had this year.

If you fancy getting your hands on a Pentium 200 MMX PC with 32Mb of ram, a two gig hard drive, a 3Dfx card and a copy of *Incubation*, then answer the question below and send your form off to the address given. We've also got ten copies of the game to give away to ten lucky runners up, so get writing funsters.











Question: Complete the Incubation legend below...
(You'll find the answer elsewhere in this issue)

"It's turn based. It's tactical. It's .....

Name: .....

Job Title: .....

Company Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Postcode: .....

Daytime Telephone Number: .....

Send your completed entries along with your name and address to: PC Zone *Incubation* competition, CPZ710A, Customer Interface, Bradley Pavillions, Bradley Stoke North, Bristol BS12 OBQ.

☐ Please tick if you do not wish to receive details of further special offers or new products from other companies. ☐ Tick if under 18 years of age.

Rules: All entries to be received by 1st January 1998. One entry per household – repeated entries will be binned. No correspondence will be entered into. The Editor's decision will be final. Any other rules we've forgotten apply too.

PC may differ from that shown.



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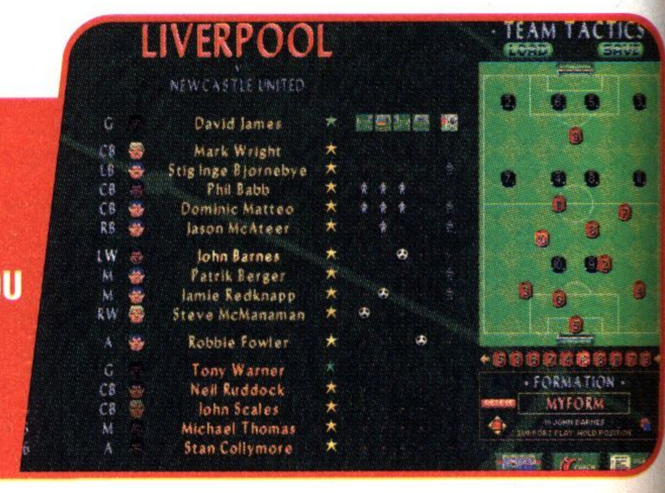


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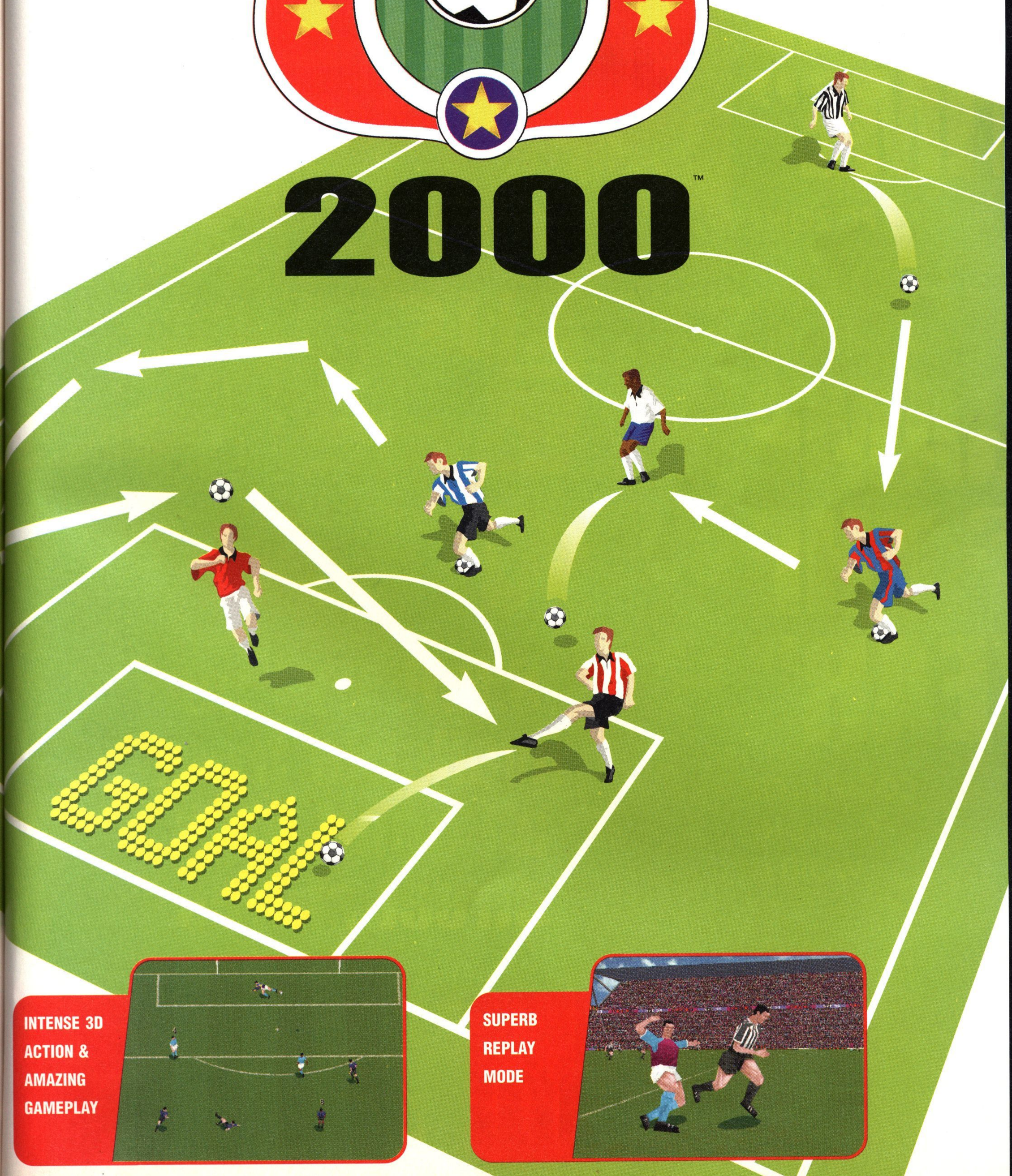
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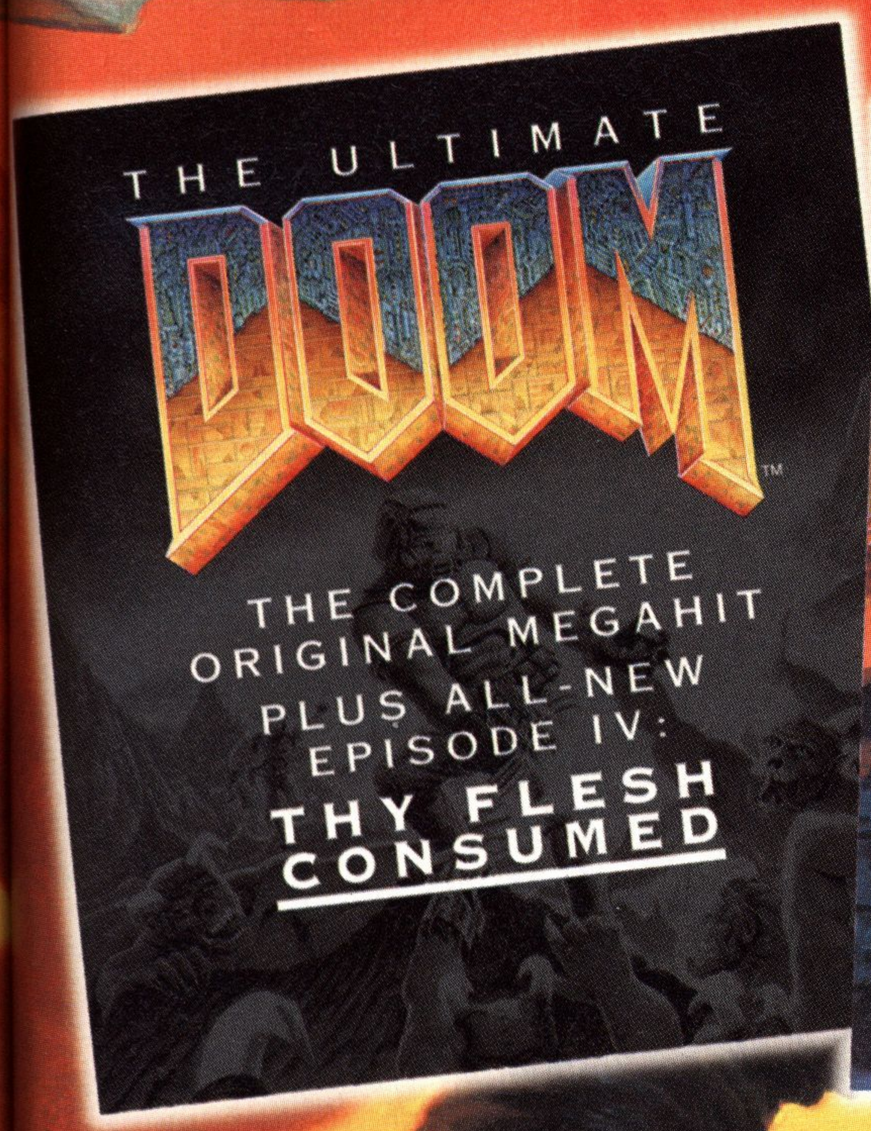
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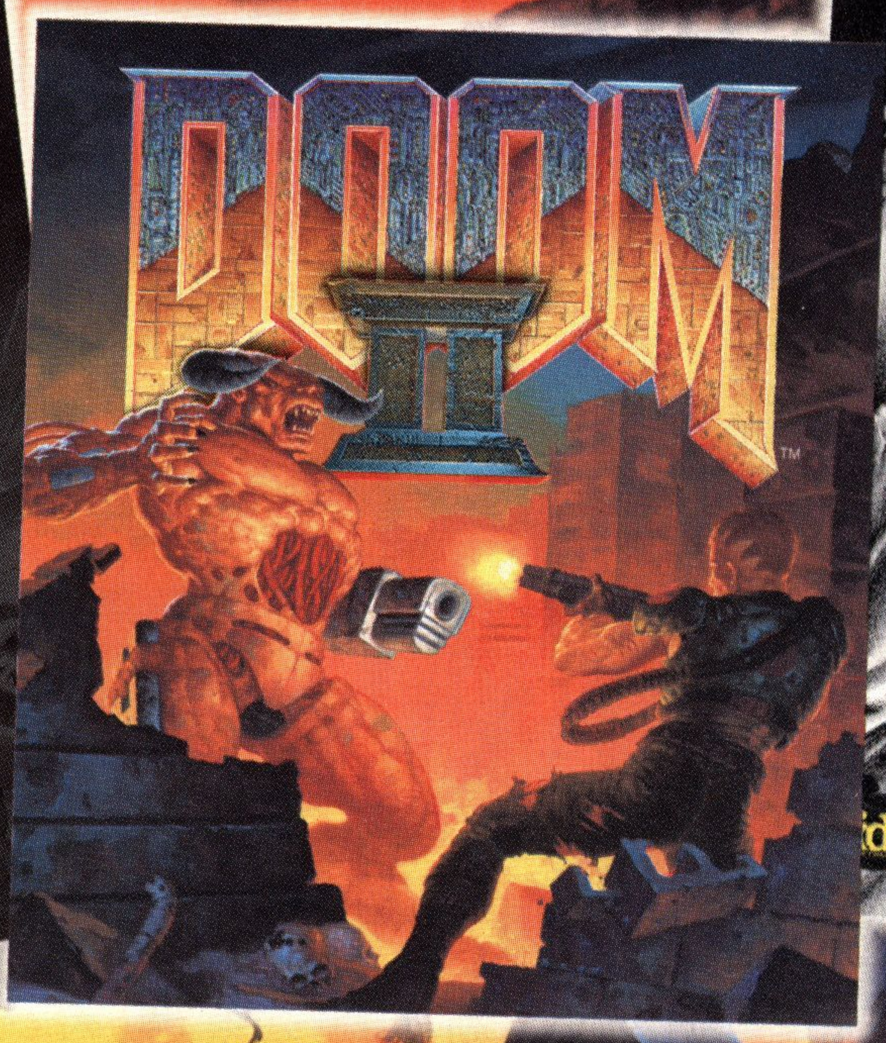
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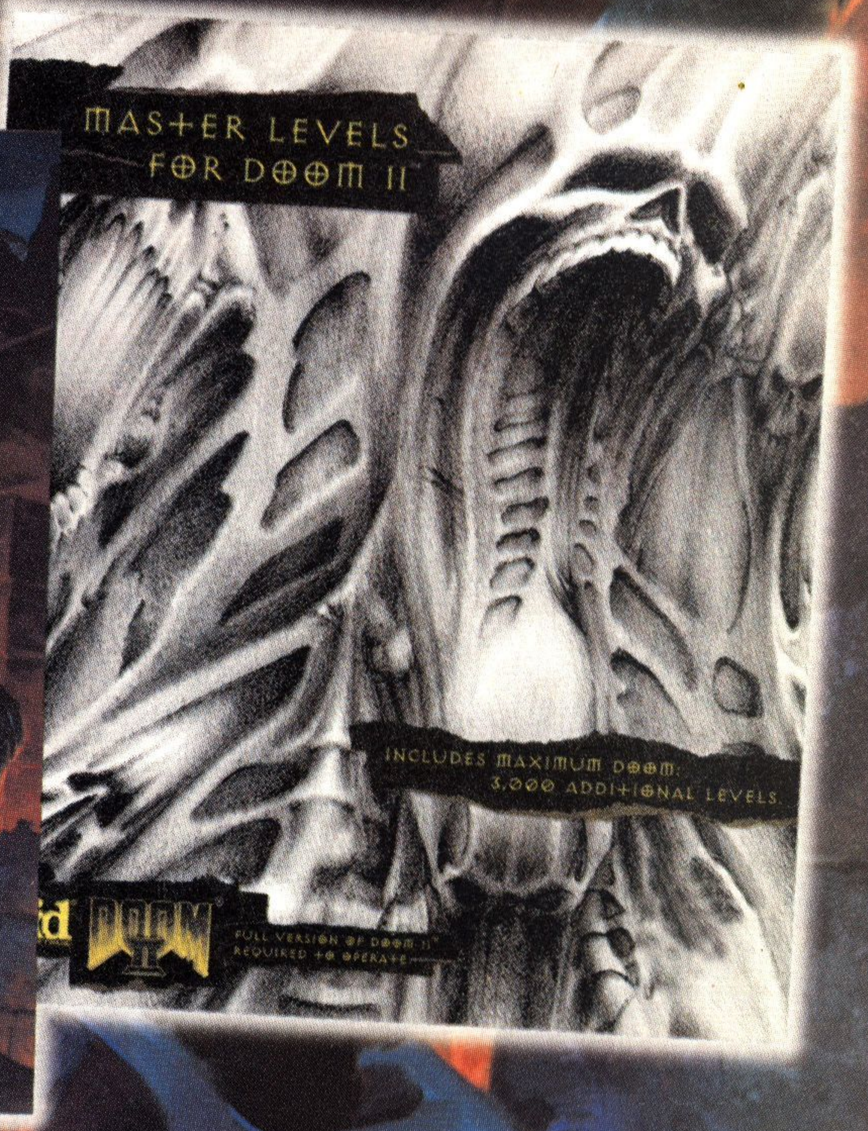
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TRILOGY

15







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TOTAL QUAKE!

It had thirty levels, nine weapons, and twelve monsters. Now it has a 1000 levels, a billion new weapons, and a squillion new 'monsties'. David McCandless takes you on a heady yet informative tour around the world of *Quake* add-ons, transformations and revolutions – in short Total Conversions.



Quake is an extraordinary game.

– BELIEVE IT NOT, QUAKE WAS ROUNDLY slagged when it first came out. Yes, you heard me correctly. Roundly slagged for a variety of bizarre reasons. It was "too dark" and "too brown" apparently. People complained about it's similarity to Doom (wow – fancy that, a game like Doom by the makers of Doom). Other people nit-picked about the explosions ("too weedy"), or the dumb-ass plot, or that the top of the 'A' in the Quake logo was "too bendy". For Christ's, God's, the Holy Spirits', all the Angels In Heaven's, Beelzebub's, the Prince of Darkness' and his holiness the Pope's sake – who gives a cargo hold of dogshit about that stuff?

Hello? Anybody clock the revolutionary 3D engine swinging around in the background? HELLO? Anybody see the fully polygonal 3D monsters, dynamic lighting, 16 player network option, and corking thrill factor of the game? Anybody? OLA? Anybody spot the fact that it utterly manked on every single other game in that genre? Anyone? Anyone?

But yes, *Quake* did – or does – have it faults. The weapons are not very well balanced. Try to pop a highly-skilled rocket launcher-armed player with anything less than another rocket launcher, to learn the true meaning of 'unbalanced'. The game is somewhat dull and plodding. Enter level, avoid monsters, exit level. Ultimately, all the glorious charnel soaked fx and perspective-correcting engine activity can't disguise the fact that *Quake* really is *Doom* in a dress, a big brown dress. Which is cool. But there are things such as "development", "progress", and "increasingly sophisticated and discerning market audience".

Normally if a game has faults, you'd be pissed off. Anything from twenty-five to fifty sovs spent at the local games shop only to find that our choice is as gripping as amyl-nitrate. But with *Quake* it's different. If iD software haven't produced the *Quake* you want, sod it – change it yourself. Better still, download a set of changes or even a completely new game someone else has done, for free. Exclamation mark!

The Open System

Quake, you see, is an open-system. It is designed from its very core to be changed and redesigned. Everything about *Quake* can be made different: the monsters, the weapons, the textures, the levels, the status bar, the typeface, the sounds, the network play – everything. It has its own programming language – *Quake* C – and its own directory structure and 'DOS mode' in the console. With a bit of nous and a big of effort, you can add, subtract, divide, and multiply any bit you want to *Quake*. You can write utilities, new front ends, and patches just like you can for Windows 95. Or you can add a weapon you thought *Quake* should have had, or change a feature you think it needs (like shooting through a teleport, for example), change the skin of the ogre and add your Dad's face, or just be really speccy and touch up the title screen so it reads: "*Quake* version 1.06 © Me". Tee-bloody-hee. Or, if you're really obsessed, you can make *Quake* into a completely new game. And this is exactly what do-gooder amateurs have done all over the world...

Allow us to show you...

Showing Promise

These are *PC Zone's* officially recommended total conversions. These are the ones we reckon you should download and follow the progress of. Now. Well go on...

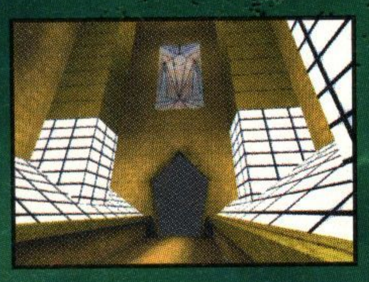
Aliens Quake



No longer legally available, but do an FTP search for the file "alienq1.zip"

This is pretty much what started it all. *Aliens* TC for *Doom* was a big event in the 3D gaming calendar. For the first time it showed how brainy amateurs could effectively create games from scratch using an engine as a skeleton. So the first big TC for *Quake* was naturally based on everybody's favourite conversion and film – *Aliens*. You know the drills: loads of marines saying "Game over man", face-huggers, resin-encrusted walls. Very atmospheric, very scary. Unfortunately a little too realistic as Twentieth Century Fox – the owners of the *Aliens* franchise – set their lawyers on the programmers and forced them (and every other website) to withdraw it or be sued. Bullying tactics? Undoubtedly. Still, you cannot censor the Internet, and although we cannot jam it on our coverdisk, there are still copies in circulation. Just use the above method to find them. Happy hunting.

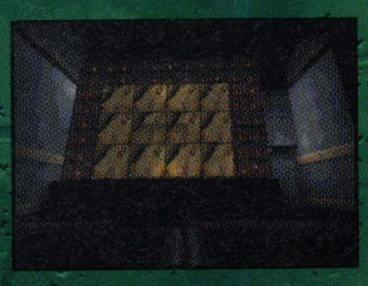
Babylon 5



www.draal.com/quake/

Put together by a bunch of hardcore *Bab 5* fans (every second word on their web-site is 'Babylon' or 'Garibaldi'), this conversion shows much promise. Aside from a garbled plot, the whole thing will have you poncing around the station and alien planets wielding PPG and autocannons from the series and stamping on Vorlons, Narn and Mimbari left, right and centre. No word on whether Claudia Christensen will be making an appearance.

Duke 3D Quake



ftp.cdrom.com/pub/quake/levels/d-f

Another inevitable TC which has been done exceptionally well. You only get one level, alas, but you get all the weapons from *Duke* recast in *Quake*, including the freeze ray and trip mines. The setting is the typical *Duke* style with LA babes and garages and the whole thing is a nice precursor to the arrival of *Duke Nukem Forever*.

Special Forces



http://sforces.stomped.com/

Good atmosphere. Good feel. We liked it. Some of the level design was a bit suspect but it has cool, *proper* weapons and some stylish details. Or as the author puts it: "I just love to shoot up Commies, Nazis and Iraqis instead of shamblers and demons." Hmmm.

Simpson's Quake

"Mothers, lock up your daughters, Smithers is in town." "Doh". "This should provide adequate sustenance." Simpson's audio samples. OK?

Hexen To Quake



www.hexen2.com/hqtc/

You could ask – why? After the release of *Hexen II*, why bother re-doing *Hexen* in the *Quake* engine? Because they can – that's the best answer you're likely to get, as you goggle at the screenshot. All aspects of the superlative 3D Hex'em up are in there, right from the boots of speed to the mace of death. Whether there's space for another fantasy TC is anybody's guess and although this remains unfinished it's still interesting.

Alba: The Road To Inverurie



http://hompages.force9.net/crinan

This is pretty impressive and, since it's by a British person, doubly impressive. Just a one level demo at the moment, *Alba* has a nice serious plot (freeing Scotland from the English), some glorious level design, and an edge that most of the other, more frivolous TCs lack.

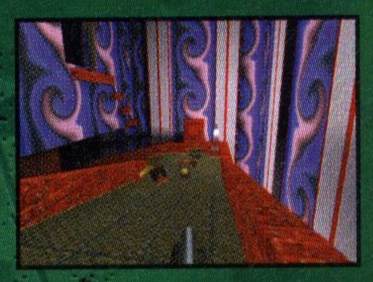
GL Mario



www.stnetcom.com/~psychic/marioquake/

Well it had to be done really. Somebody converted the super, smashing, great N64 game *Mario* and whomped it into *Quake*-o-vision. The result is more experimental than playable but it has an impressive chase-cam and some nice mushrooms.

Happy Fun Quake



Hilarious texture and sound conversion which daubs the melancholy *Quake* engine with all manner of hyper-colourful paintings, silly noises, and clowns. Very amusing.

The Paradox Effect

Homepage down, do a web search for "paradox effect"

3 level beta. Acid neutralizers, armour patches, personal forcefield, fire extinguishers, axe, flame-thrower, heavy laser rifle, gravity gun, mines, blow-up able walls. Nice.

Mortal Kombat Quake

w3.citenet.net/users/ctmx0511

Features all the characters and taunts from the popular beat 'em up series plus a bunch of *Quake*-style weapons and some arenas for hand-to-hand kombat. Still in early stages, but interesting if you like this kind of thing (I, incidentally, do not).

The Sword Of Ares

www.planetquake.com/simitar/

Terrible typeface but some great level design. It's still in alpha but shows much promise.

AirQuake



www.planetquake.com/airquake.htm

Utterly butterly über-conversion with fighter planes and other military vehicles replacing players and towns and countryside replacing the levels of yore. It's very strange, very weird. Try to explain to your regular deathmatch buddies that you're busy being an armoured car this evening. Not easy.

The Demon King



www.planetquake.com/tdk/download.htm

Wow. What can we say? We're impressed. This is a total conversion in the true sense. A whole new game – an RPG no less – all wrapped up in *Quake* clingfilm. You can read books, cast spells, collect artefacts or just marvel at the beautiful architecture and fun loving monsters. Download it.

Horror

www.planetquake.com/rxn/horror/horror.htm

Interesting twist on deathmatch. One person plays the killer – the other players are victims. The killer has significant advantages over the others (larger weapons, faster running speed) and the victims must team up to triumph. Sounds a bit *Scooby Doo* to us, but by all means check it out.

Quake Rally

www.impact.frag.com

We've already spooged over this enough thank you very much, but suffice to say it is one of the greatest *Quake* conversions ever. A real-time car racing game with every feature you could imagine or want. Get it.

DEATHMATCHERY

Of course you haven't played *Quake* until you played deathmatch. But if you find the big Q's weapons too meagre, or the power-ups too predictable, or the levels too yawny, try one of these three pro-plus recommended TCs.

ULTIMATE QUAKE

http://members.aol.com/mgummelt2/index.html

No point explaining. We'll just list the features. Choose from many character classes: klingon, borg, human, tigerman, elf, predator, terminator, and then from several sub-classes including warrior, warlock, jedi, mage etc. Each combination of race and class endows you with different weapons, different spells and different physical characteristics and resistances. For instance, the warrior has a really cool sniper mode with the shotgun. He has to stand still but can fire short, silenced, concentrated bursts which will kill anyone. Extra effects such as footsteps, four types of grenade, kicking and pushing of objects, a jetpack, and the ability to electrocute people in water with the lighting gun, add-up to a very unpredictable and hilarious deathmatching experience.

PAINKEEP

www.planetquake.com/skins.painkeep

Of all the deathmatch conversions, this has to be the most elegant and amusing. Without going over the top, developers Evolve have created a well-balanced, good-looking TC with great weapons, level design and great power-ups, plus a smattering of well thought out features and hilarious japery.

KILLER QUAKE

www.mpog.com/kqp

This has everything you could possibly want. Here's a list: zeusbots (computer controlled opponents by the AI programmer of *Daikatana*), guided missiles, nail bombs, proximity mines, portable teleports, grappling hook, gatling gun, rapid fireball launcher and loads of *Quake* modifications. There are 42 new weapons (including the BFG 9000 from *Doom*), a personal dog called Cujo, fake backpack bombs, and 'Air Strike' where you call down an airstrike on your enemies.





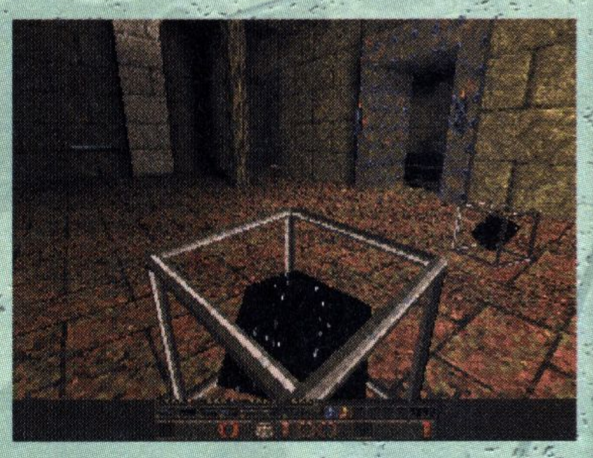


(Above) Some of the characters you can play in *Ultimate Quake*. (Top left) A Borg, armed with laser and a 'Borg-i-fier', and a nice plastic cat suit. (Top middle) A Klingon, who likes close, hand-to-hand combat. (Top right) And finally, um, Xena: Warrior princess. Um.









(Above, clockwise) Beartrap. You can dump these around blind corners and laugh as your deathmatch chumps drag the huge clamp all around the level. Cover your arse with an auto-sentry. A self-powered auto-tracking nail gun. The airfist is a compressed air launcher, great for super rocket jumps and for diverting rockets away from your precious bottom. The gravity well is the best weapon in the game. Drop it and run as it sucks in everything within ear-shot. Throaty chuckles guaranteed.





(Above) Killer *Quake* in action. (Bottom left) You gotta love a weapon which reduces your deathmatch opponents to a fine spray. (Bottom right) And you gotta admire an add-on which gives you a football-game style radar. Yellow dots are 'nasties' apparently.

ESSENTIAL WEBSITES

WWW.STOMPED.COM

Massive sprawling archive and resource centre for everything remotely *Quake*-like. Good-looking and well-designed.

REDWOOD.STOMPED.COM

Just the newsy bits of Stomped. Interesting read.

WWW.BLUESNEWS.COM

Probably the best *Quake*-related news site in the world. Has stiff competition from others but remains the peoples' homepage.

WWW.PLANETQUAKE.COM

A hub that should know better. Every resource you could possibly imagine, it's all here. Somewhere.

FTP.CDROM.COM/PUB/QUAKE/

Simply the biggest collection of *Quake* files in the world. There are various mirror sites around the world. We suggest you find one in the UK – accessing this site from the UK can be very slow.

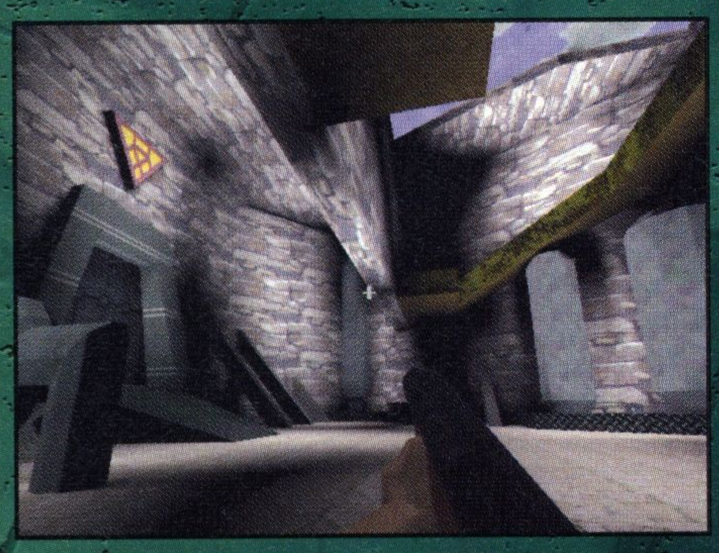
Total Crap

Of course, not every conversion can be brill, skill, and er, thrill. A thousand monkeys slamming on a thousand typewriters may well churn out the complete works of Shakespeare, but even a bunch of well-meaning primates would be hard pushed to churn out some of the TCs (Total Crap) we've had to wade through to bring you this feature. Total Crap is perhaps a little unfair. These people have spent lots of time and effort working on their labours of love and, it has to said, some are unfinished alpha and beta versions, but you don't want to spend two hours downloading a 20MB Zip only to end up installing pond life, do you?

After The Fall

www.planetquake.com/atf

"Fight your way through a mining operation set up by an alien race" – woo, that sounds unfamiliar. This inauspicious hook will probably not drag you too enthusiastically into an early version of a *Doom*-style TC which draws heavily on *Quake II* and *Turok*. Lots of side-placed weapons, nice rockfalls, organic walls, neat but inconsistent textures, and patchy level design. Still in alpha, ATF's designers promise four or five episodes in total. I got bored.



Battle Chess

www.rit.edu/~rcc6615/chess

Worth looking at, but don't get too excited. You can't play against the computer and the interface is irritating.



Borg

www.gatewest.net/~lemke/borg

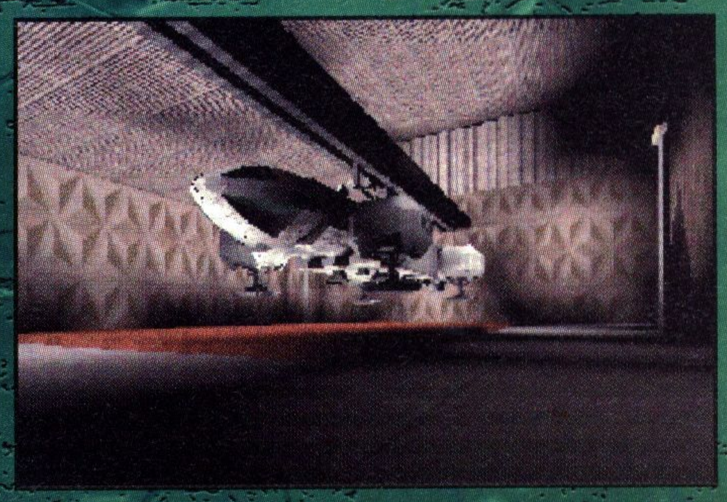
A featureless borg ship does not a feature-packed game make. Horrible heavy metal style music, awful clanking sounds and horrible garish textures (reminiscent of that Geiger game, *DarkSeed*). Borg is a bit poo all round, with very samey animations and weapons. Not very *Star Trek*. Not very good.



Human Decision Required

http://brutality.com/hdr/index.html

Some Space 1999 nut has produced this, based exclusively on the "evergreen" (his words not ours) sci-fi series. Still in its early stages but ambitiously laid out in detail on the web-page. Our advice: do what Martin Landau did – move onto better things.



Code Red

www.planetquake.com/rxn/codered/index.html

Crappy boring arena based boredom. Shoot the robot spawners. Boring. Predictable weaponry. Tediousness. Boring. Get the idea?



Starship Troopers

www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Heights/7901/Main.htm

Early beta, but rubbish nevertheless. Why bother releasing a TC that simply has a couple of bad levels, some slightly faster firing shotguns, and a text file that describes all the cool things it *will* have in it when it's finished? No point.



Who needs Microsoft *Flight Sim 97*? Air*Quake* in all its panoramic bird's-eye glory.



COMMERCIAL STUFF

MALICE

(Quantum Access/Epochalypse £14.99)

This is a perfect example of how a good TC can propel you into the big league. *Malice* not only has a story, great new weapons, great new levels, and all sorts of jiggery pokery, but it has ideas, and balance, and brilliant implementation which puts it head, shoulders, torso, and genitals above any of the other 'amateur' TC's.

You play a futuristic hitman (distinctive feature: red bandanna) caught between two warring super corporations and...well, whatever basically, you get to shoot people and explore big levels and use phallic weaponry all with not quite *Quake* style feel and atmos.

The new weapons are nothing short of "fantasticardo" (as the Spanish say) and in most cases, have to be reloaded on a regular basis which puts a nice spin on combat and deathmatch, forcing you to make strategic withdrawals and duck for cover to jam another cartridge in your .44.



The cut scenes are done within the *Quake* engine and played like demos.

Monster-wise, the reports are good. Most of the levels are populated with swatmen, *Malice's* equivalent of grunts. They're pretty easy to dispatch although they have a tendency to parascend from the ceiling giving you awkward angles. You also get mercbabes (girl warriors with teleporters), four legged ninja robots with laser cannons, massive banshee mechs, plus a whole flotilla of underwater nasties (frogmen, blowfish and barracudas). Each section is frosted with a big end of level Bossman. And they are *tough*.

Although the guns and the bad guys are cool, *Malice*'s big deal is how they've managed to get away from the original *Quake*. In the game, you can read computer screens, fly on a hoverboard, enter a submarine (complete with heat-seeking missiles and torpedos), push barrels, boxes, and enemies, float down massive drops with a parachute, and wear scuba gear. You run and shoot faster, drown quicker, and there's no pentagram of protection, quad damage or armour. Deathmatch is fast and hilarious. So basically, it's a riotous blend of *Duke Nukem* and *Quake* and it is brilliant.

WEAPONS

PISTOL: Basic start up, sideways tilted .44 with unlimited ammo



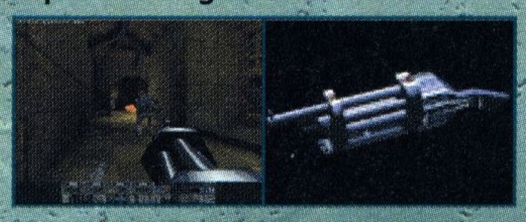
MINIGUN: Joyous! a true rapid-firing death-by-drilling machine



HELLFIRE: Hellfire, a semi-blunder-buss with explosive tipped shells



MORTAR: A fine arc mortar gun replaces the grenade launcher



VERT: A vertical-barrelled shotgun (yum)



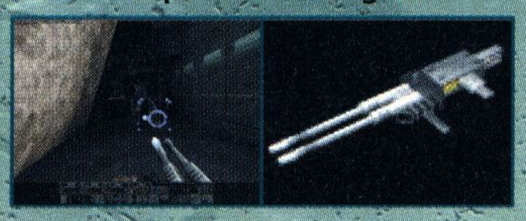
ROCKET LAUNCHER: A proper, authentic missile launcher



UZI: Excellent fire rate but often quite inaccurate.



THE PUNISHER
A focused plasma beam gun



HIPNOTIC MISSION PACK

(Activision/Ritual Entertainment £14.99)

www.ritual.com

Still shining as one of the best add-ons available, the official iD pack, *Scourge Of Armargon*, is pure professionalism. Brilliantly inventive levels, great weapons (including the Molinjar, lighting axe), new monsties, a great deathmatch level and just all round gloss. Very cool.

ROGUE MISSION PACK

(Activision/Rogue 14.99)

www.activision.com

Not as impressive as *Hipnotic*, but nevertheless rife with chunks of level design mastery and an endearing 'exploratory' gameplay feel. It also sports seven new adversaries (most crap, it has to be said), a few new weapons (ditto) and built-in Capture The Flag (pas mal).

HEXEN II

(Activision/Raven Software £34.99)

Not really a TC per se but an good example of the *Quake* engine taken to another dimension. In this case, a dimension of trolls and golems (sigh). But it is the benchmark by which all other Fantasy RPG style TC's must be measured. Good looking, fast paced, loads of FX, and some nice weaponry.



(Above) Uzi nine millimetre. Wash day tomorrow. Nothing clean right? etc. (Below) Unwitting guard about to eat Punisher bolts.





AND ANOTHER THING...

WHILE WE REJOICE IN THE WORLDWIDE MARKETPLACE WHICH *QUAKE* HAS CREATED, AND WHILE WE CELEBRATE THE JOYOUS GAME-CREATING SKILLS OF OUR FELLOW GAMESTERS, WE ALSO LIKE TO KEEP A CLEAR HEAD AND VIEW THE PARADE OF ADD-ONS WITH SOME OBJECTIVITY. MANY OF THE TCS, EVEN THE GOOD ONES, SEEM TO SUFFER FROM VARIOUS DISORDERS ENDEMIC TO THE SPECIES. IF YOU ARE CONTEMPLATING, IN THE PROCESS OF, OR HAVE ALREADY CONSTRUCTED A TC, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE AVOID THE FOLLOWING PITFALLS:

HIGH FACE COUNT

Lots of people make this mistake when they set about designing their levels on Daddy's dual-Pentium II 266MHz workstation. Their levels contain too much detail and too high a face count, so are sluggish on anything less than the aforesaid workstation. In GL, this can make entire levels unplayable and cause stuttering sound.

NO GL MODE

A common problem with early TCs and poor programmers with no access to 3Dfx knowledge. At worst, some TCs have no specific GL elements, so many of them don't work properly and cause hilarious on-screen artefacts and crashing. Not good.

OLD BADGED AS NEW

A lot of TC outfits boast about their 'seven completely new monsters' when all they've done is stuck a new texture on an enforcer and called it an 'En'ffoR-cà'.

BAD DOCUMENTATION

Like sex, you either get none at all or so much that it makes your round bits hurt.

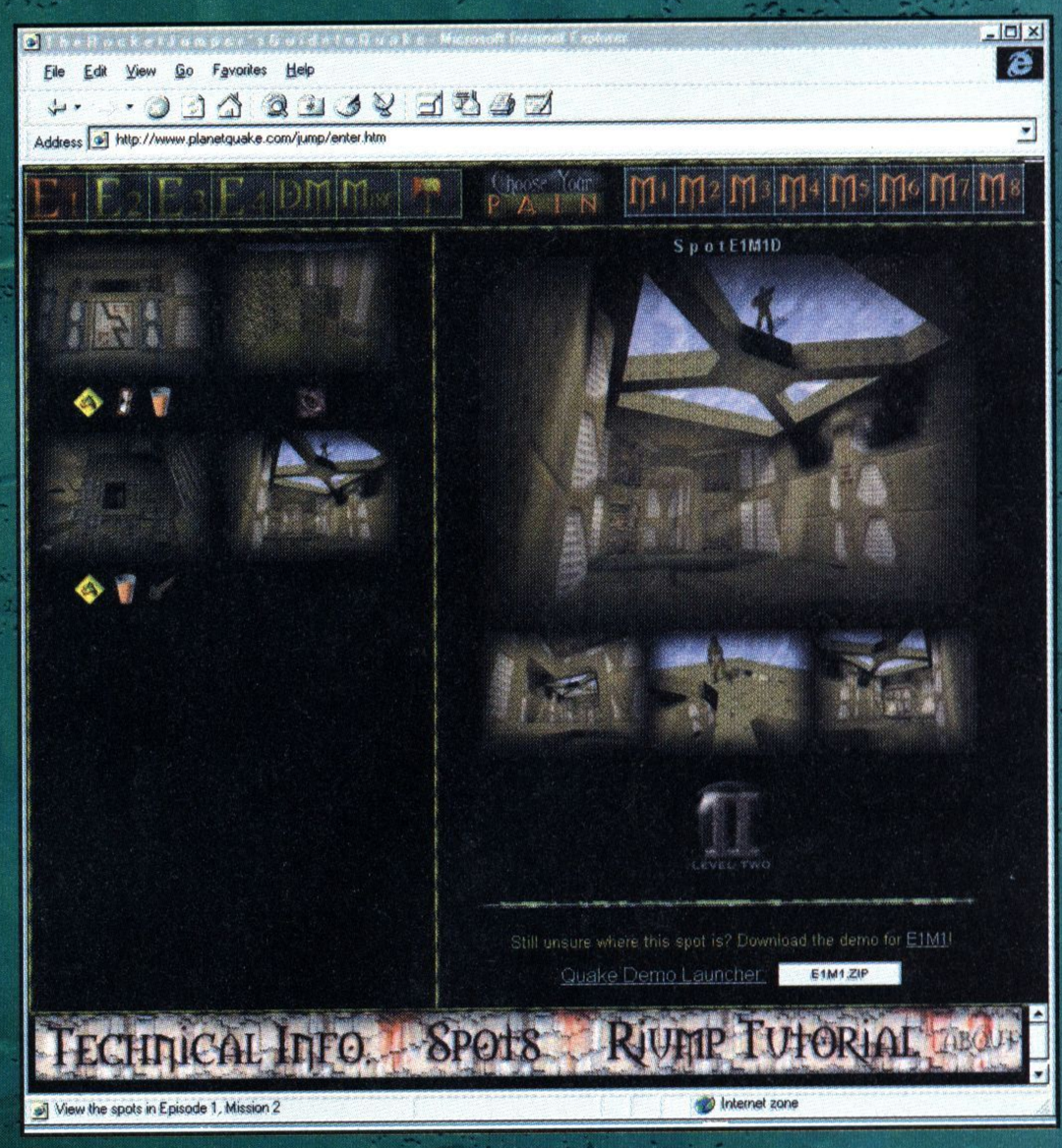
TOMUSCO

Actually short for "too much shit going on". Some TCs suffer from adding too many weapons, too many keys and spells, and far too many levels. One TC we looked at had an 88 page manual, forty new key bindings, and twenty-eight weapons. Too many ideas can dilute a concept. Ever heard of the phrase: "Too many cooks spoil the broth. Especially fat ones. With purple blotchy bottoms." No? Funny that.

ROCKET JUMPING

Many have attempted it, but few have mastered it. It can mean the difference between winning a game and being utterly malakered. It can save you from lava, enable you to reach power-ups, and can offer you sniper points beyond the imagining of most players. And even the boys at iD software didn't know you could do it. It's the fine art of rocket jumping and, like Jedi powers, it can be yours to master if you're not too old to begin the training.

Turn your web browser to a very good looking site at: www.planetquake.com/jump/enter.htm where experts in the field will help you with your first few tentative thrusts in orbit. Here, you can study the physics and damage statistics of rocket jumping (did you know you only lose 10 per cent health from a rocket jump if you're wearing red armour?). Here, you can also be shown the best spots for jumping and sniping and, of course, be taken through the process step by step, and given your own special macros to aid your learning. In addition, there are some demos downloadable to enable you to see masters in action. Definitely worth a look.



WHY NOW?

Many of the developer groups see fit to release several beta versions of the TC months before they are released. Often you'll download a 3Mb zip containing three empty levels and a new texture, plus a massive text file explaining the millions of things that will be in it. Act like a proper software company – you don't see them releasing a new demo every time they change their typeface or add a new sound. Do *one* demo and *one* final product.

STALE GENRE

Apparently, there are a finite number of stories in the world. If you took *Quake* TCs, there'd only be two; one written by J R R Tolkien, and one directed by James Cameron. Please, please, please, let's see less TCs based around elves, runes and codpieces, or aliens, guns and flame throwers, and more weird or interesting stuff. *Experimental Drugs TC. Sex Quake. Noah Arks. Sim Puberty.* Oh we don't know, but you get the idea.

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Service & Reliability User Survey, Desktop PCs August 1996

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*ATi 3D Charger Graphics Card includes two 3D Games (Wipeout & Assault Rigs)

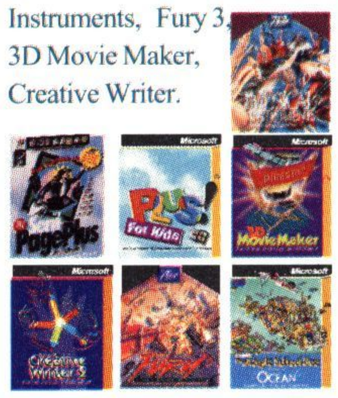


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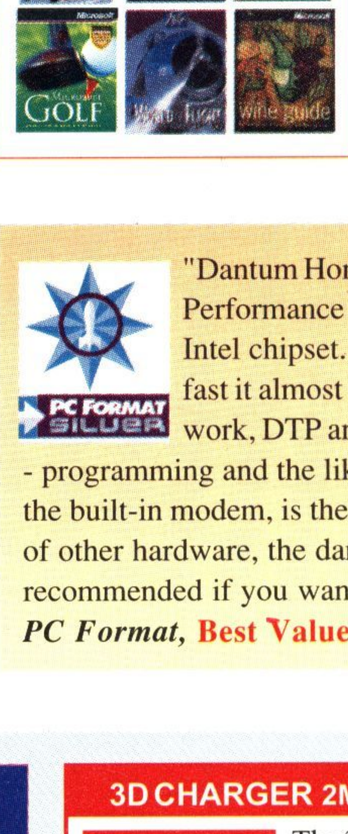
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Service & Reliability User Survey, Desktop PCs August 1997

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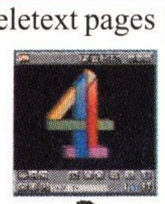
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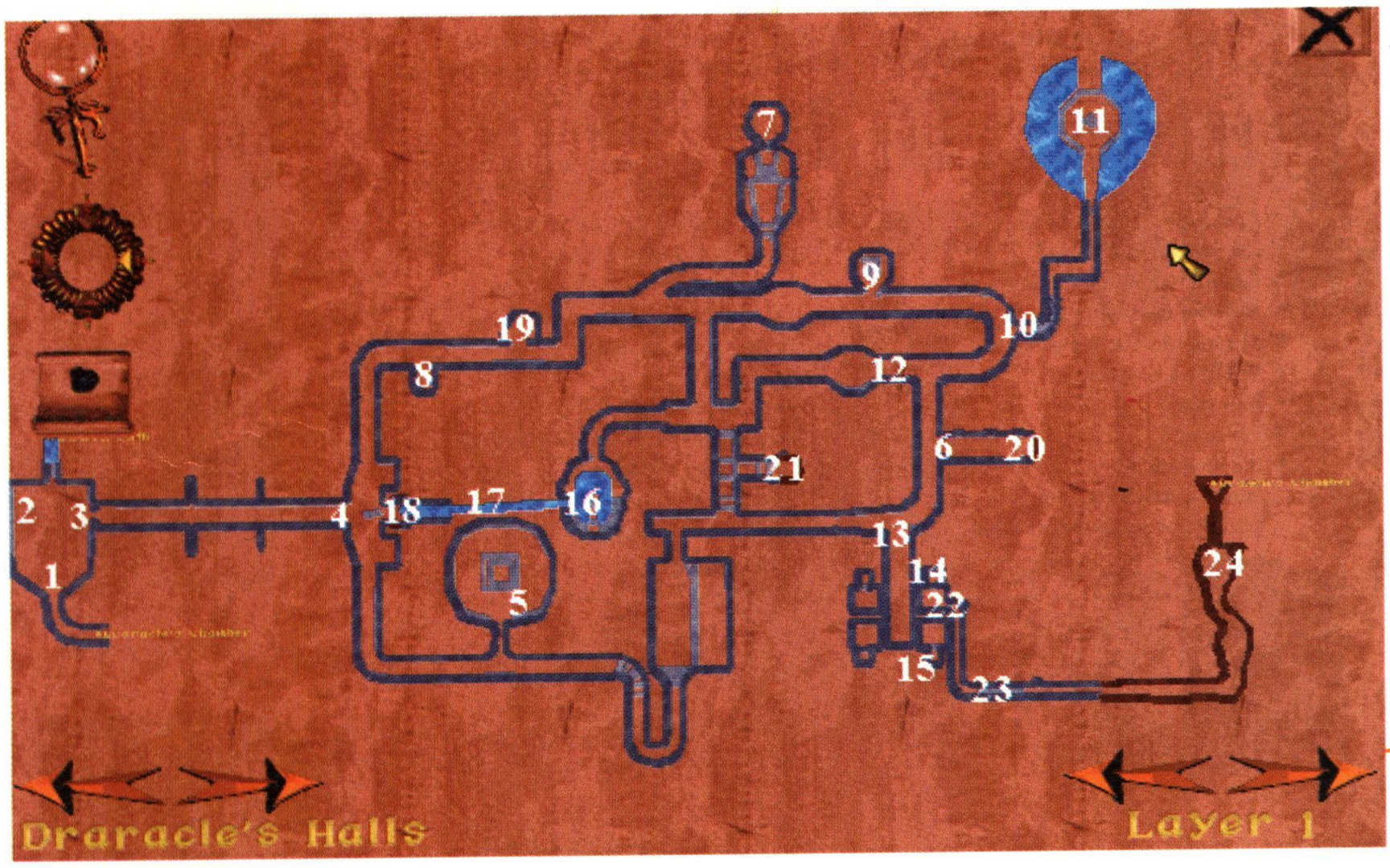
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Lands Of Lore: Guardians Of Destiny - Walkthrough Part One (discs 1 & 2)



This is for all of you who have been gnashing your teeth and inventing swear words by the second because you've reached a dead end in *Lands Of Lore 2*. Now you can sit back and relax, because here's Pete Davison to lend a helping hand.

01

01 The Draracle's halls

The first stage is outlined in the game's manual, so we're picking up the story after Luther has met the Draracle.

The Draracle will have told you to visit the Cat-People in the Southern Continent, so you can do one of two things: either go straight there by going ahead at the start, or explore the Draracle's museum and get some useful items. We're going for the latter option.

At (1) wait for the skeleton to stop, and the gate will open. On the table at (2) you'll see a sword, some armour and two champion stones; swallowing these will give a temporary boost to your combat abilities. To go straight to the Southern Continent, pull the lever to the north; alternatively, move the tapestry aside at (3) and click the revealed wall to open a hidden passageway.

You're now in the Draracle's museum – note the Ridley Scott-type atmosphere (in other words it's pitch dark). By the time you get to (4) the door will have closed behind you and you'll need to find another way out. Cast spark on all the torches on the walls to light them – at least now you can see what you're doing. At (4) pick up the skeleton's key from the brown panel on the south wall. Click the huge throbbing orb thing for a brief introduction to the museum. And watch out for skeletons; if you fight one it may steal the key back. If one does manage to take it off you, kill it and click the corpse to retrieve it, but don't worry if you can't find it.

At (5) is a big gem. Use the key in the brown panel in front of it for commentary (use the key in any brown panel in the museum in the same way). Pick up the key when you're done – always remember to do this after viewing a display! There are several pictures in the gallery at (6), each with a slot for the key underneath them. At (7) click on the corpse of the Dracoid leader and something weird will happen; do the same thing with the key. Number (8) is an image of an enormous worm – and a key slot. Get Thohan's great sword at (9) – it's broken but you can fix it later.

Number (10) is a door in the wall. Open it to reveal a passageway which leads to another display at (11) – the City of the Ancients. Long sword 'prism' is also here. At (12) the key can finally do something productive: put it in the panel and a box containing a speaking stone will drop down. Right-click it on your portrait to view the scene. Pick the key up again after you've got the stone.

At (13) open the time travel display with the key; if you don't have it, pull the lever at (20). Beat up the skeleton before he kills you. Ignore the hourglass at (14) – it's important when you want to escape later on. At (15) you'll find Coco's cap on the floor; wearing it causes Luther to fall asleep (though whether or not this is relevant is anyone's guess). When you leave the time travel display take the key with you.

At (16) is a throwing axe that will always return to you. Grab it, and the platform will drop. Luther transforms into his lizard form, so run up the watery passageway at (17).

Info

Save regularly – if you don't you're asking for trouble. You can skip big chunks of the game (for example, you don't *have* to go to the Draracle's museum), but if you do you'll miss items which could prove useful later on. Note that we haven't included every single secret area... so don't write in and tell us!

At the end (18) you'll find spell scrolls in wall niches: two for healing, two for spark and one for summon. Using summon will add the spell to your spell book. Pull the lever on the south wall to get out again – you'll find yourself back at (4).

At (19) you'll see two locked gates, behind which is a dragon gem. You can reach it by attacking it with something: 'prism' worked for us. Pick it up when it's revealed. (20) finds you back in the gallery. Open the painting at the end of the corridor and pull the lever; this will open the time travel display if you lose the skeleton's key.

At (21) you'll see a load of blocks lying around. Move them by clicking and dragging and crouch, facing the north wall. A lightning crystal is hidden in a tiny little niche – use it on Luther when you want to cast a manna-free lightning spell. Throw it away when it turns dark – it's no longer any use to you because it's run out. (22) brings you back to the time travel display. Smash the hourglass with your weapon and batter down the south corner of the east wall – but make sure you do it quickly because Luther will age rapidly when the hourglass breaks and could die. Jump into the secret passageway and run through (23). When you get to (24) you're nearly home and dry! Pick up the dragon's blood from the floor (it acts like a grenade) and enter the dragon's lair to get to the Southern Continent.

02 The Huline jungle, part one

Welcome to the Southern Continent. Don't worry about the creatures in the jungle – they won't attack you unless you provoke them, so don't make any offensive comments about their mothers. Get to point (1) on the map and you'll meet a two-headed cat creature. Run *back* as soon as Luther finishes talking. When it's gone, go to (2) to meet a grumpy Huline. He won't let you into the village until Shalla, a missing woman, returns. Carry on to (3) where you'll meet two searchers. Go to a house belonging to a Huline female named Kit'Yara at (4) for some useful weapons, including a bow and a magic sword which is yours if you give her a power orb. You'll get this later.

If you come across the huge pit and the waterfall at (5), don't fall over the edge! At (6) you'll encounter two more searchers who will tell you about a big spider in the caves. Go to (7) and either chop down the brown vines or cast spark on them to get rid of them. Repeat at (8), (9), (10) and (11) – you're aiming for (12). (13) is the entrance to the caves.

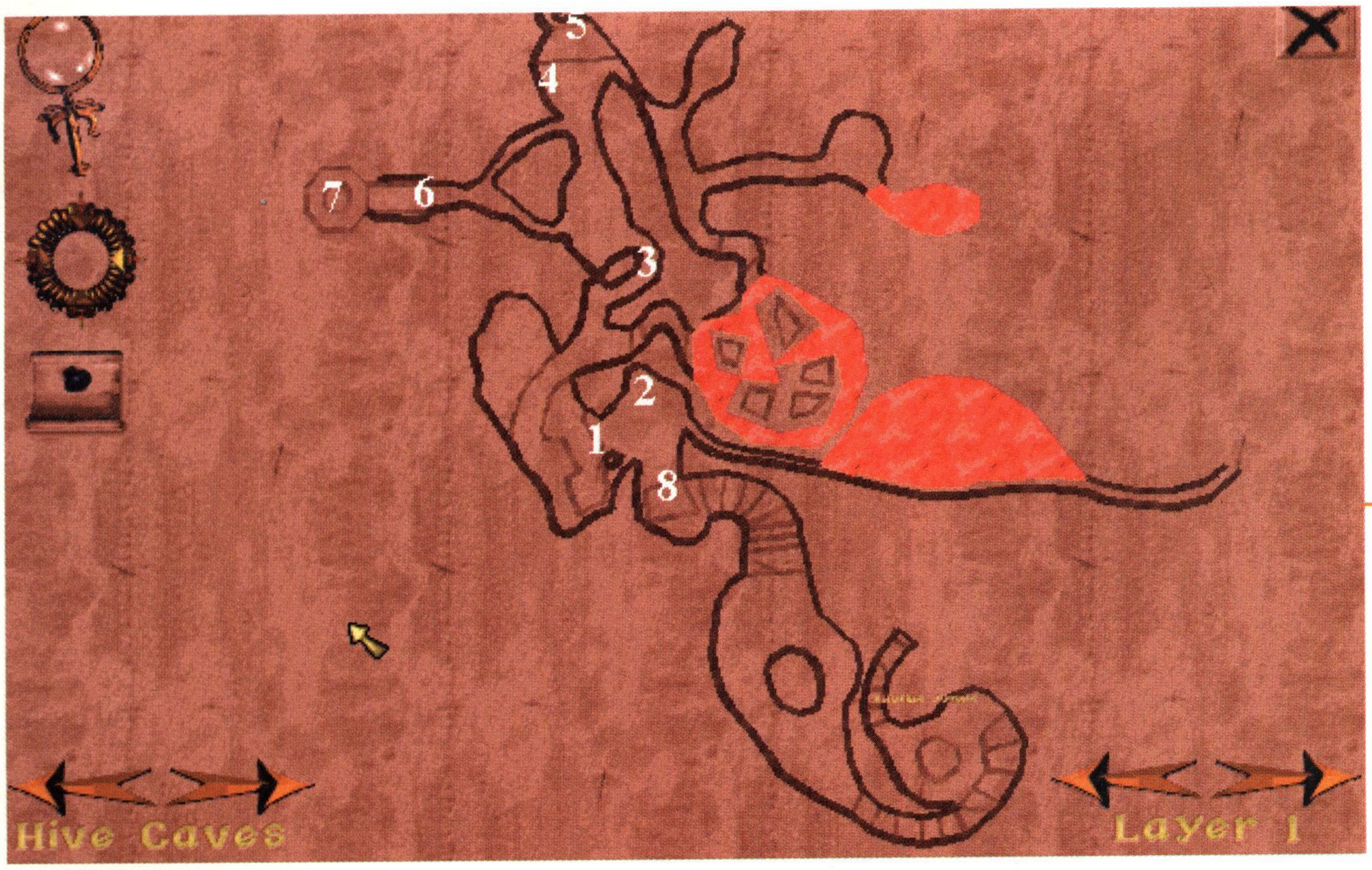


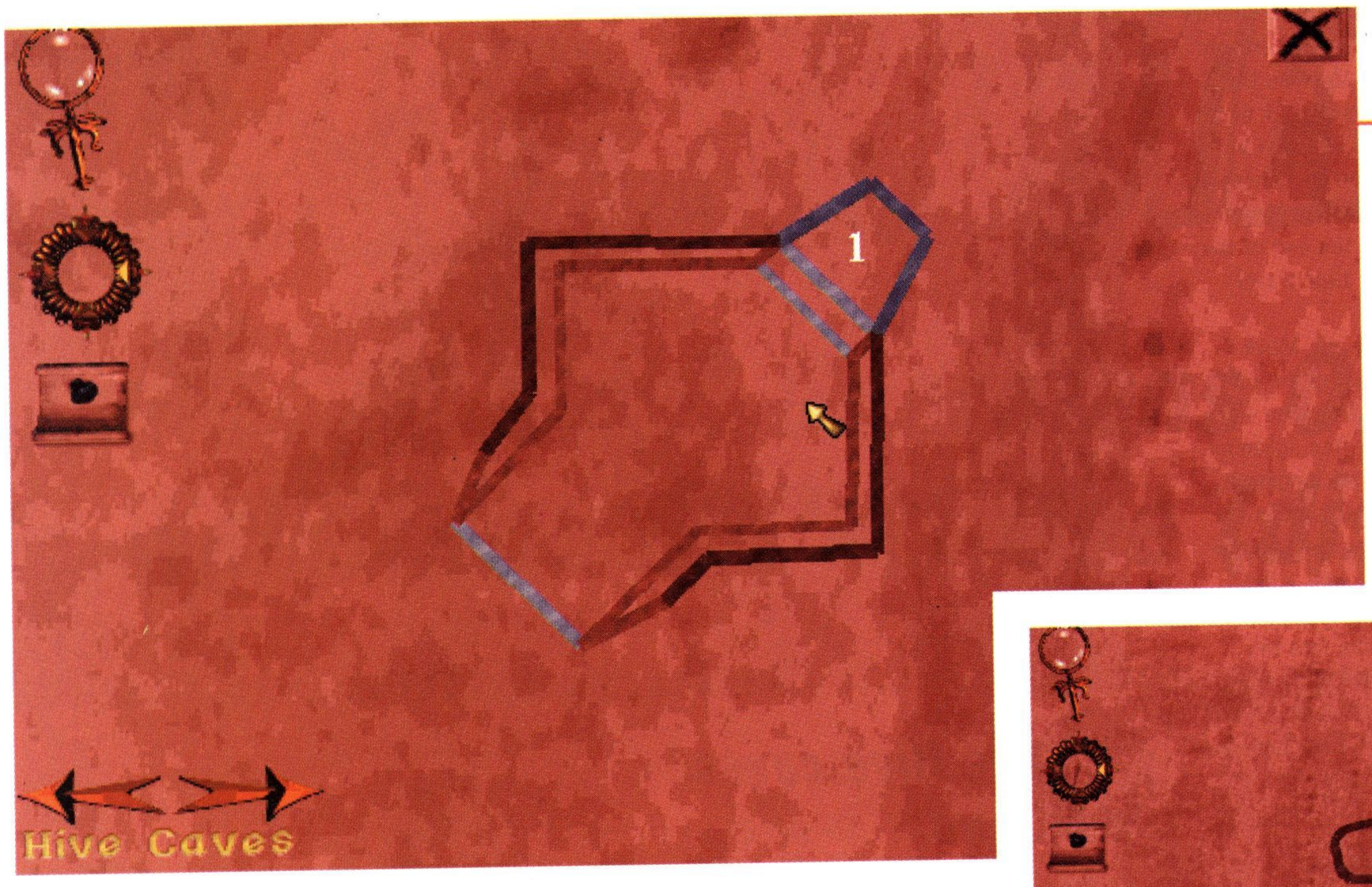
03 The Hive caves, part two

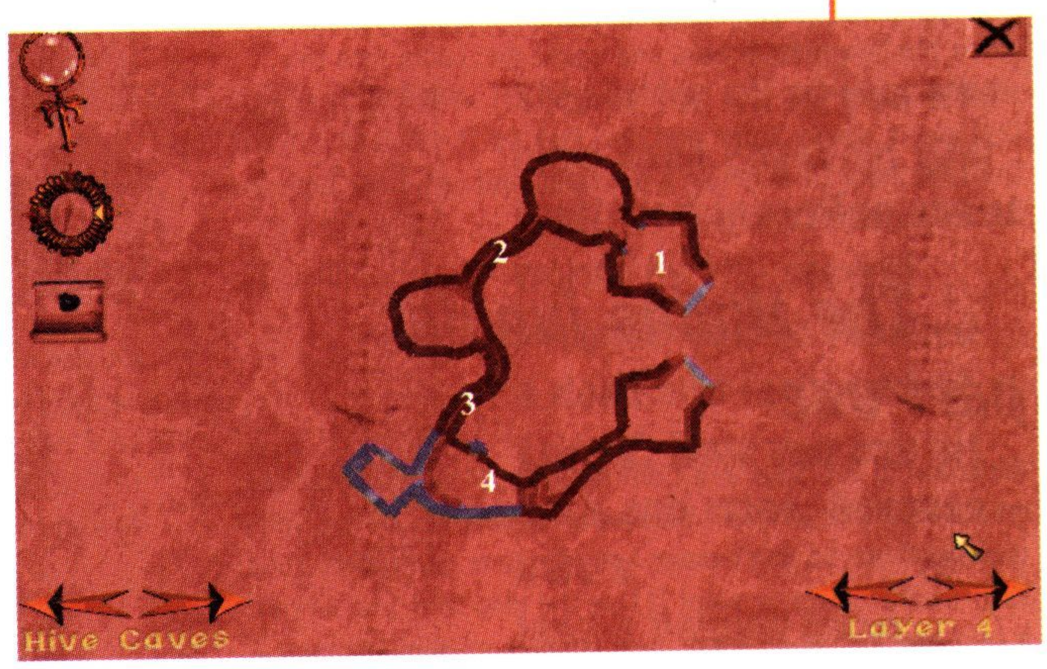
Kill the enormous spider at (2) – twatting it with a good weapon will eventually work. Jump over the pit at (1), but save your game first. At (3) kill the executioner. Go to (4) to find the missing girl's remains, and her mother at (5). Return to the Huline jungle before going any further.

04 The Huline jungle, part two

Go back to (2). This time round you can open the village gates. You can talk to the village chief at (14), and there's a cellar in an abandoned house which you can enter at (15). Go to the cantina at (16) to meet Baccata, who will arrange to meet you at the Bane River later. There's a useless drunken Huline at (17), and a Huline mystic at (18). He'll pinch your magic (which will regenerate), but you can loot his house; he'll also fix Thohan's sword from the museum for a power orb. Look round because there's a speaking stone and fireball wands. Set off for (19), the monastery. Go into the left room to meet Dawn, then go through the big door of the main hall ▶







to meet Julian. They both want copies of the runes from the caves, so go back to (13). Stop at the area marked 'W' to find a bees' nest. Click on it twice to get two lumps of wax.

05 The Hive caves, part two

Retrace your earlier route and head for (6). Note the symbols on the wall. At (7) call the lift by playing the iron flute that Julian gave you. Each button corresponds to a different layer: the top one is layer 1, the bottom is layer 7.

06 Layer 2

Click each of the cat stones once at (1) to reveal a fountain.

07 Layer 3

If the spider thing at (1) poisons you, use heal level 3. At (2) crawl into the gap. At (3) you'll find two lightning crystals and a spider's nest. Inside is the net of exile.

08 Layer 4

At (1) there's another speaking stone. Around (2) morph into lizard form and crawl through the passages at (2) and (3). At (4) you'll find a cat panel, and three buttons around the edge. Click the buttons in the order of the combination from layer 1 to open a passageway which leads you to layer 5.

09 Layer 5

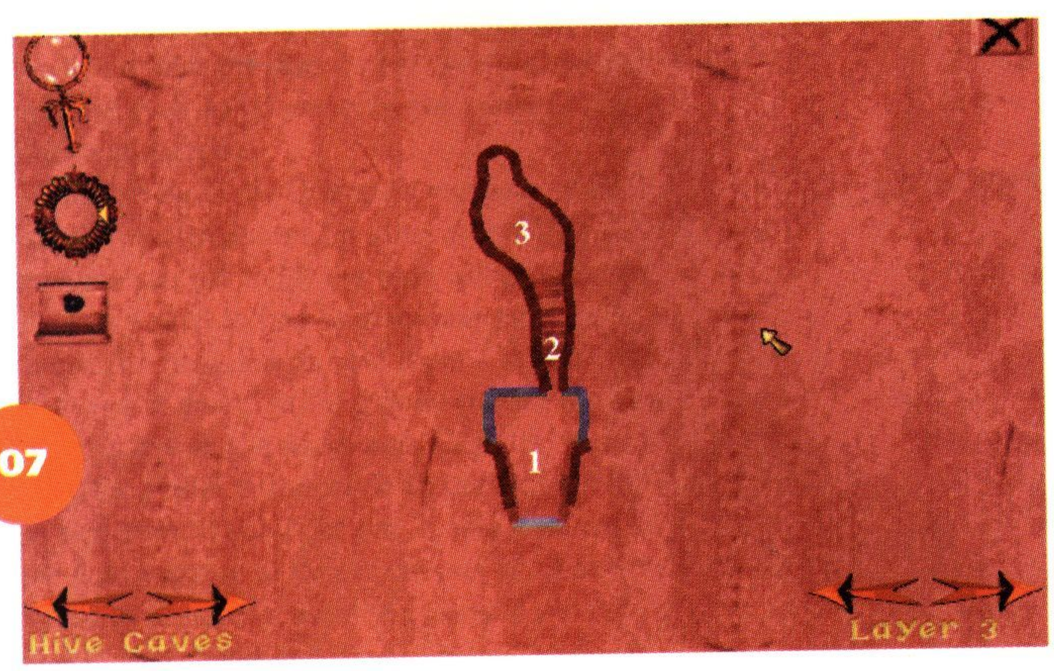
Click each of the cat stones at (1) once. Kill the executioner at (2) and keep going to get to layer 6.

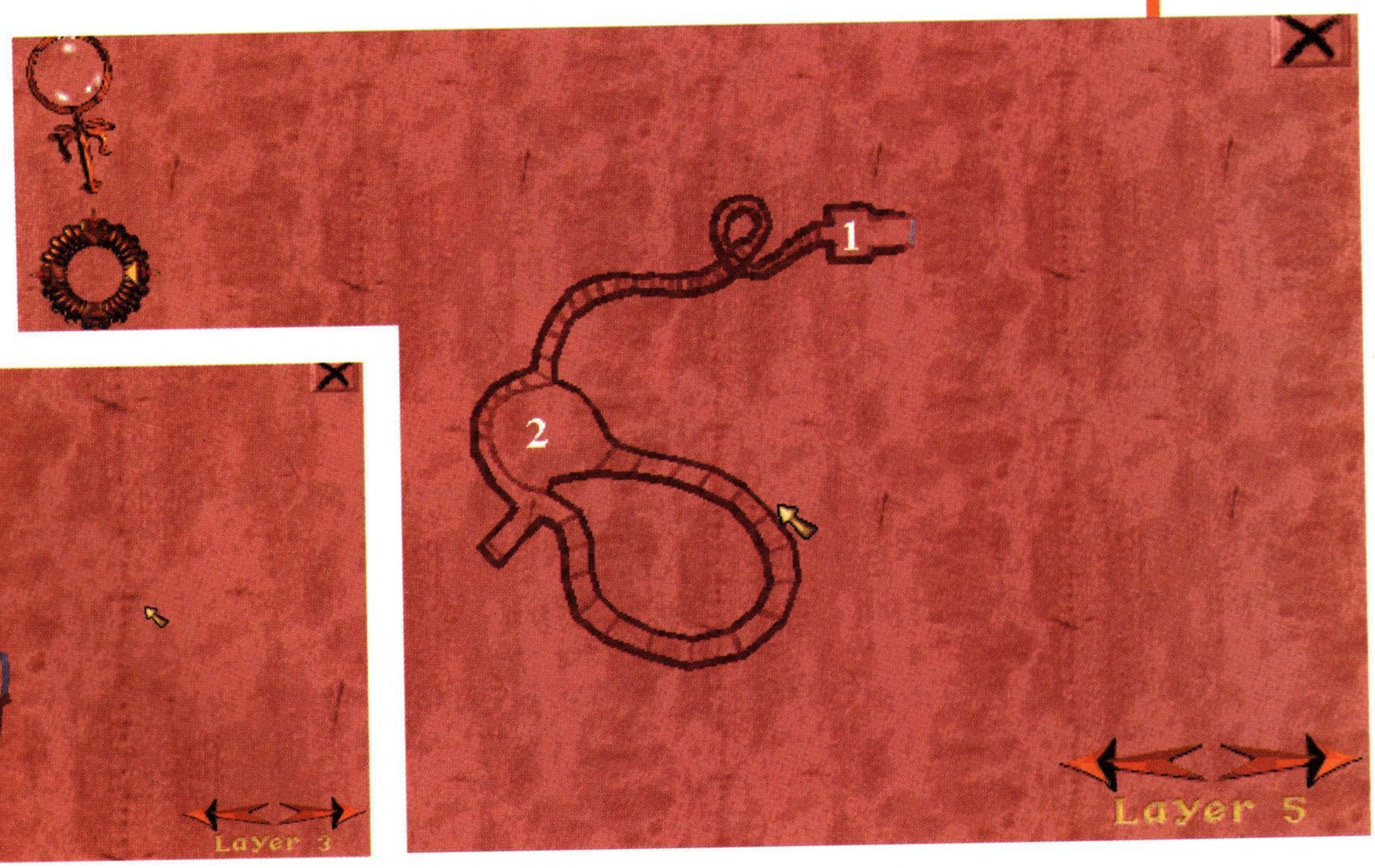
10 Layer 6

At (1) is the Vicious Rolling Boulder Trap From Hell and a heal scroll. Carry on to layer 7.

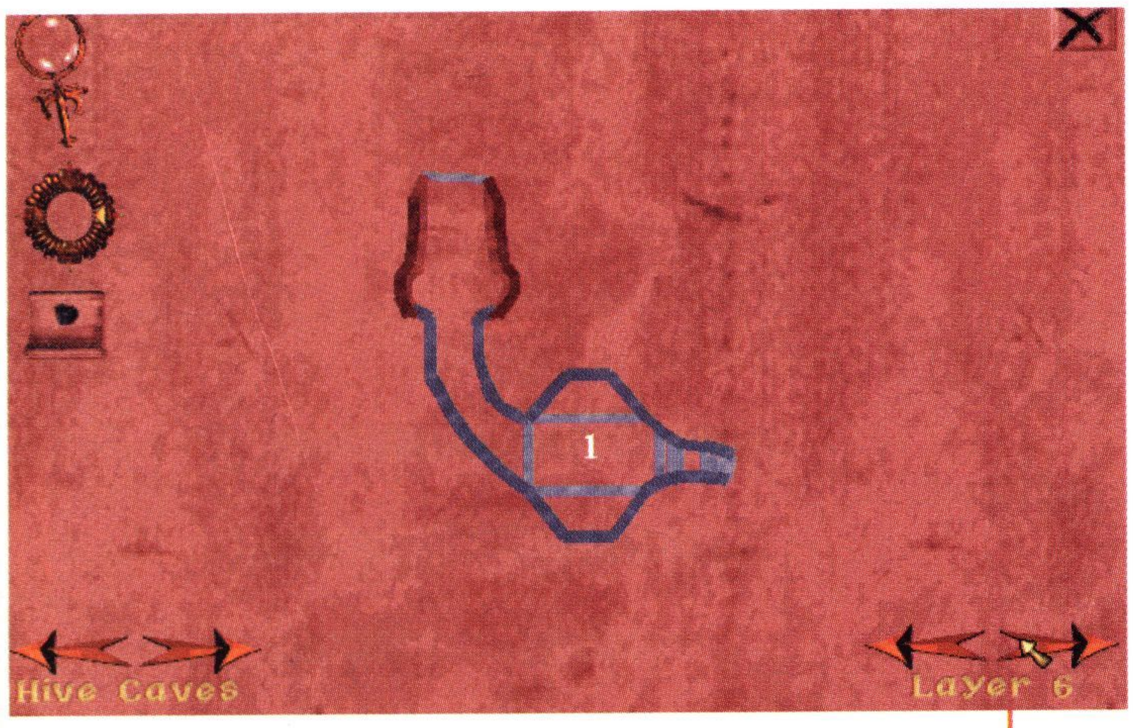
11 Layer 7

(1) is your entrance from layer 6. Walk down the corridor at





06
08
09
07



(2) and the roof will collapse. Return to (3) and use Julian's flute in the wall niche to open a passage. Follow it to (5), avoiding the spinning blades o' death at (4). When you reach (5) press the buttons on the walls at the end of the corridor, light the torch in the niche by the pit with spark and then click on the ladder to climb down. When you reach the bottom click the moving stone in the background – using it can temporarily boost your magic abilities. Click the brown stuff on the left. Use both bits of wax on the runes: one for Dawn, one for Julian.

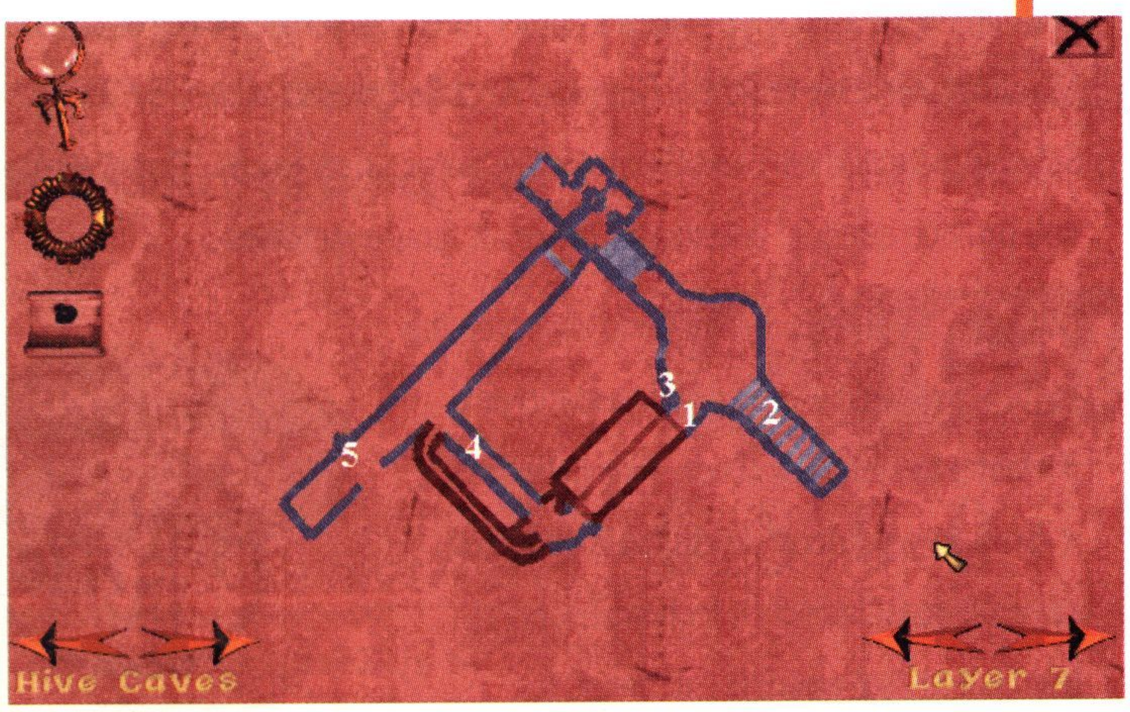
Head for the lift to get back up. If it isn't there, press the green keypad to call it. Go back to the top (layer 1) and haul ass for the exit, watching out for the executioner at (8). Voilà! You've done the caves.

12 The Huline jungle, part three

Leave the caves and you'll meet Dawn at (20); give her a copy of the runes and she'll tell you what to do next. But first things first, you need to return to the monastery at (19). Take a detour via (21) and climb the waterfall. Put all scruples aside and take a speaking stone from the dead geezer's bag (well, he won't be needing it). Go back to (19), give the other runes copy to Julian and talk with him and Dawn. Having done that, leave and go to (22). Kit'Yara will meet you and give you your 'ticket' into the Wild Ones' lair.

Baccata will be waiting for you at (23), but he's asleep (lazy bastard). Talk with him and he'll stop the Gladstone guards at (24) attacking you. Watch the cut-scene, dash through (25) to (26) and watch the next one.

That's it! You're halfway through, albeit with a little assistance – but you'll have to wait until next issue to find out how to cheat at discs three and four.



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Somebody couldn't wait until Christmas morning. Poor Teddy's been traded in for a PC!

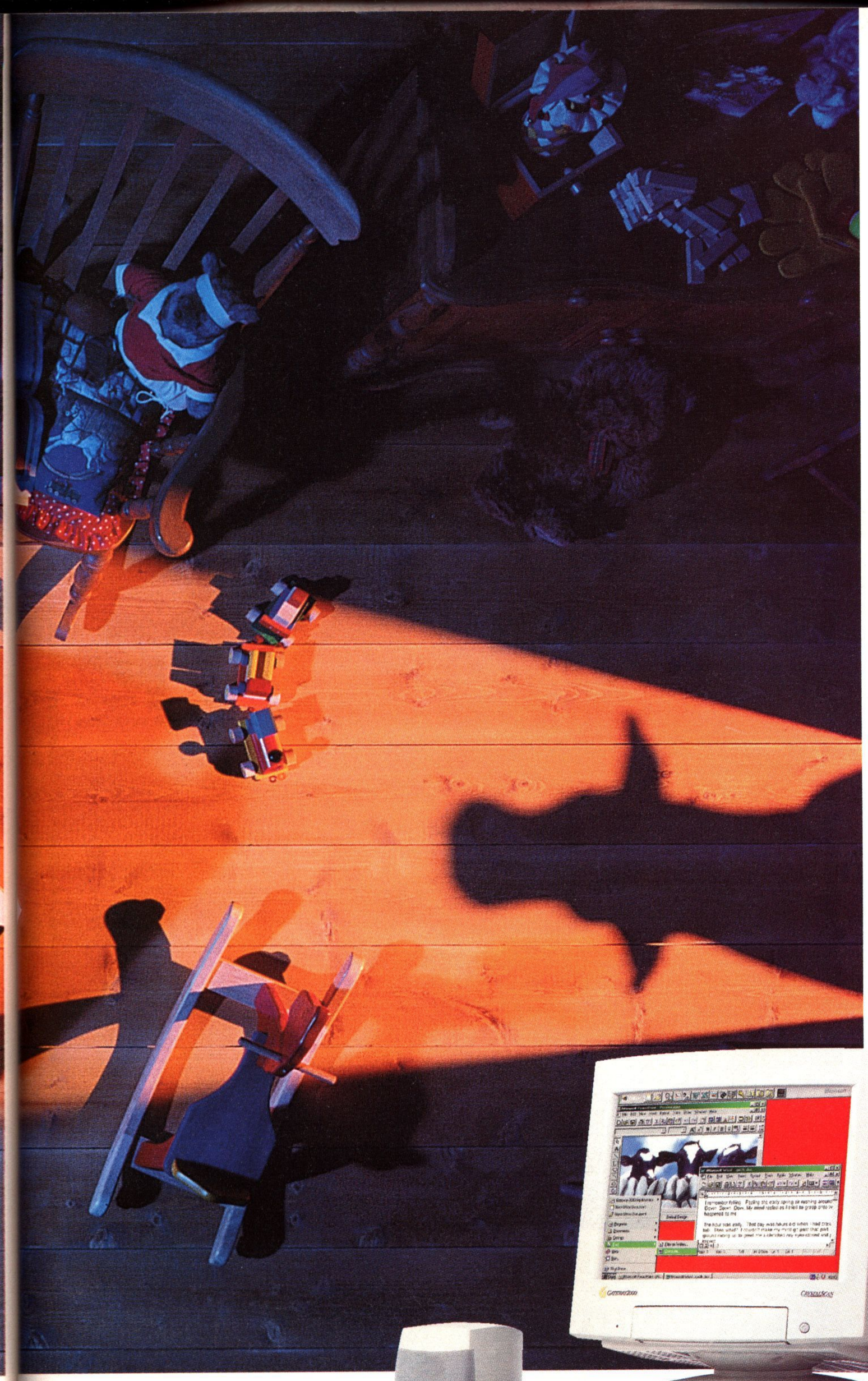
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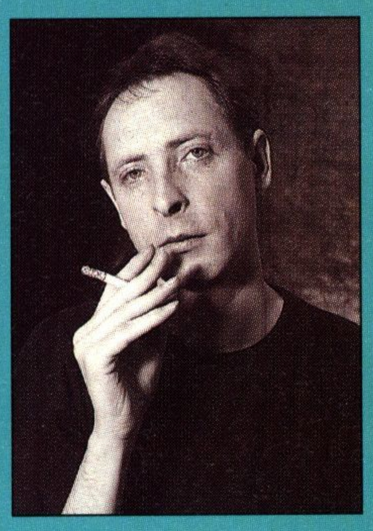
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Tech ZONE

Creative Labs: the next step



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Veteran gamers will no doubt remember the days when music and sound effects for PC games consisted of annoying bleeps from the PC's internal speaker. Creative Labs put an end to all that nonsense with the introduction of their Sound Blaster range of sound cards, and have since gone on to become a name that's almost synonymous with music and sound in PC games. We thought it was high time we caught up with them to indulge in some top sound-related chat. But first, the story so far...

July 1981
Creative Technology is founded in Singapore.

August 1988
Creative Labs is born in San Francisco. They launch the Game Blaster, a stereo sound card for the PC.

November 1989
Creative release an 8-bit sound card for PCs. It has a midi port. It has a joystick port. Its name: the Sound Blaster.

May 1991
The Sound Blaster Pro arrives. It has a built-in CD-ROM interface, a digital/analogue mixer and stereo recording for line-in and CD audio.

November 1992
The Sound Blaster 16 brings advanced signal processing to PCs. Realistic sounds in games are within Creative's reach for the first time.

March 1994
The Sound Blaster AWE32 tightens Creative's grip on the PC sound market. Competitors breath a collective sigh of despair.

January 1997
Creative launch the Sound Blaster AWE64 and AWE64 Gold. Both cards are generally recognised as the gamers' first port of call for premium quality sound.

Chris Anderson

CHRIS BOYCE IS CREATIVE LABS' Brand Manager. In the two years he's spent with Creative he's been responsible for their CD-ROM and DVD drives, 3D graphics cards, speakers and video and upgrade kits. As he's obviously had a fair bit of experience with all things Creative, we asked him about the company's future as a big player in the PC hardware market.

PCZ: The Sound Blaster card stood alone as the industry standard for a long period of time. You're now facing stiff competition from several major hardware manufacturers. Will this change your strategy for the PC market?

Chris Boyce: At the moment we're experiencing an ever-increasing share of the market (which currently stands at over 70 per cent) of the PC audio card market. We're now selling more of our AWE64 product than we are our older Sound Blaster 16 range. A culture of continual product improvement, coupled with extensive ongoing research and development (we have more than 400 dedicated engineers) makes us fully confident that we will continue to set the standards that others will try to follow.

PCZ: Are your high-end sound cards aimed more at musicians than gamers?

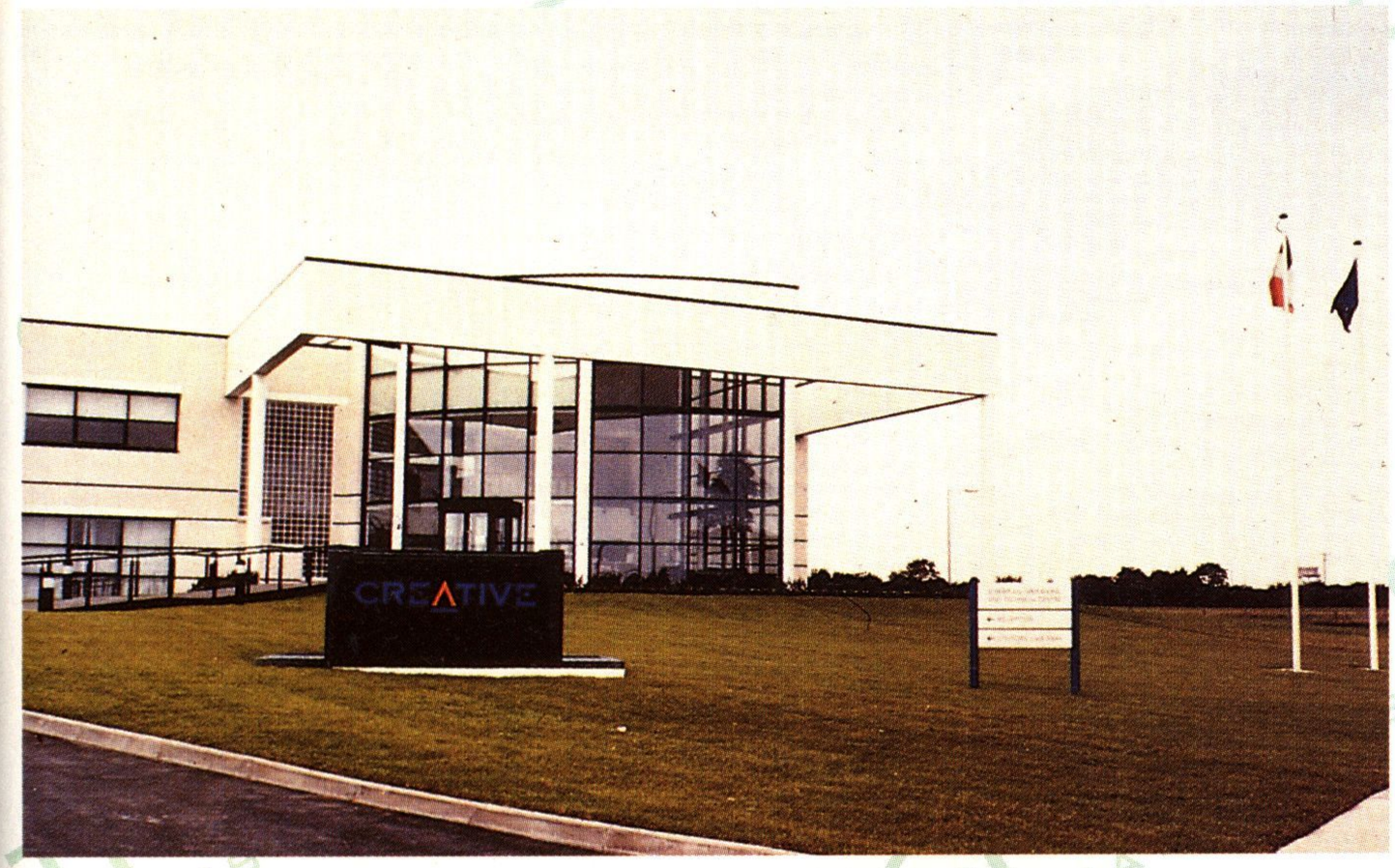
CB: No. Our experience is that gamers are some of the most demanding consumers of PC audio products. The AWE64 Gold, for example, is aimed at the gamer first, and the musician second. It has downloadable SoundFonts for great sound effects, 4Mb (upgradeable to 24Mb) memory for larger and better samples, superb signal-to-noise ratio for excellent sound reproduction, and fantastic low frequency response for those thudding shotguns, etc – not to mention 100 per cent Sound Blaster compatibility.

PCZ: What chipset are you using in your new Graphics Blaster Exxtreme accelerator card, and why?

CB: 3Dlabs Permedia2. We chose it on the grounds of excellent performance in 2D and 3D, comprehensive 3D feature set, wide title support (true hardware acceleration of Direct3D, OpenGL and HEIDI), and low system cost.

PCZ: How will the Graphics Blaster Exxtreme compare to 3Dfx and PowerVR? (The GB Exxtreme will replace the 3D Blaster as Creative's flagship 3D card.)

CB: The Graphics Blaster Exxtreme is a more







Creative started life in Singapore and went on to become a leading PC hardware manufacturer. They now have offices all over the world, including this one which has just opened in Ireland.

rounded, general purpose product than the 3D Blaster PCI, which was targeted at hardcore gamers. Not only does it boast 3D performance similar to 3Dfx and PowerVR2, it can compete directly against cards like the Millennium II with regard to 2D Windows acceleration. And all for less than £100 for a 4Mb card!

PCZ: Are you planning to release an accelerator card to compete with the next generation cards on the way from 3Dfx and PowerVR?

CB: Creative Labs will continue to offer ground-breaking products in the 3D graphics market. This is a very important area of growth for us.

PCZ: How impressed (or unimpressed) have you been with the 3Dfx and PowerVR cards?

CB: 3Dfx: good raw power, and great developer support. It's now being caught by better value 2D/3D solutions. Voodoo Rush is a step backwards, in my opinion. PowerVR: good performance if well programmed, but it can be difficult for developers to get to grips with – which has manifested itself in poor title support to date. As well as lacking bilinear filtering until the recent introduction of PCX2, you also need a heavyweight PC to get the full benefit from it.

PCZ: Give us a reason why PC gameplayers should buy the Graphics Blaster Exxtreme over its rivals.

CB: Great all-round performance (2D and 3D), true hardware acceleration of Direct3D, OpenGL and HEIDI. It's great for *Quake* level editors, and as I said, it costs less than £100 for a 4Mb version.

PCZ: Who are Creative working with at the moment and why?



CB: Our Developer Relations team are inundated with requests from software developers looking to get into DVD.

PCZ: What are your views on DVD? Will it change the games industry as is being widely predicted?

CB: DVD is another very exciting area for us. The DVD upgrade market is set to explode, and we fully intend to be the leading supplier of this technology. The higher capacity allows for more sophisticated games with increased levels and greater detail. MPEG2 delivers video quality which is even better than television, which makes games even more compelling. Fully immersive AC-3 audio completes the effect.

PCZ: Where will Creative be in a year's time?

CB: Our current financial results are excellent, with record profits and almost $500m in the bank. These give us the flexibility to grow in many directions. If we continue to execute correctly, we expect to be:

"The DVD upgrade market is set to explode, and we fully intend to be the leading supplier of this technology."

- an even bigger gorilla in the sound card market
- the market leader in DVD
- challenging our rivals for the number one spot in 3D graphics
- selling loads of our outstanding high-quality, three-piece (and above!) speaker systems.

PCZ: Are you playing any games at the moment, Chris? Sneak a few hours in when no one's looking, do you? (Nudge, wink.)

CB: Playing games is a bit of a 'busman's holiday' for me since I spend a fair amount of my time looking at and messing about with the latest, greatest offerings from the developers (not unlike yourself, I suspect). If I had to make a call, I'd say *G-Police* at the moment.

PCZ: Thank you.



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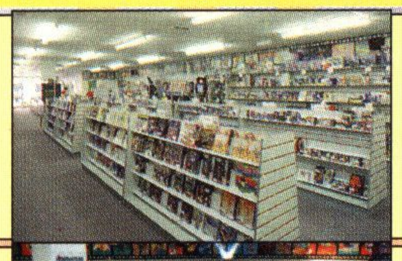
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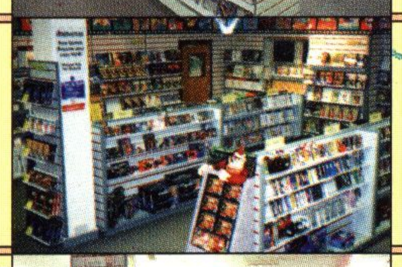
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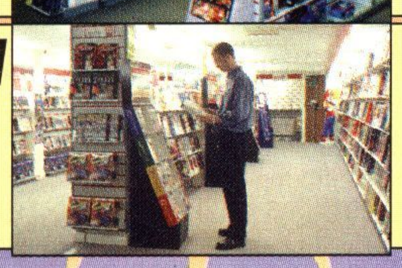
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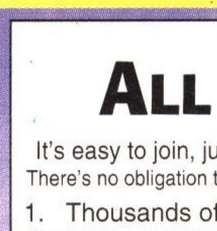
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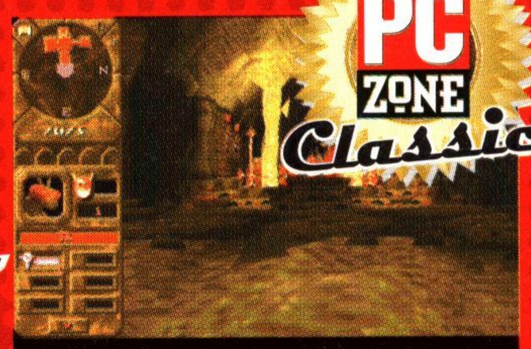
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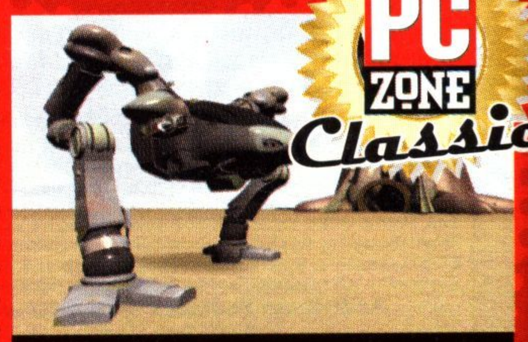


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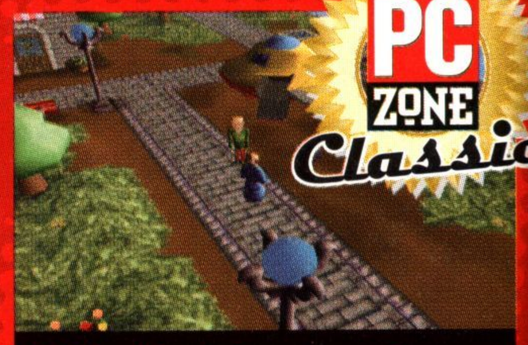
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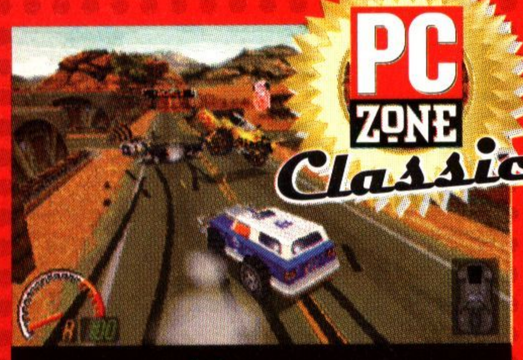
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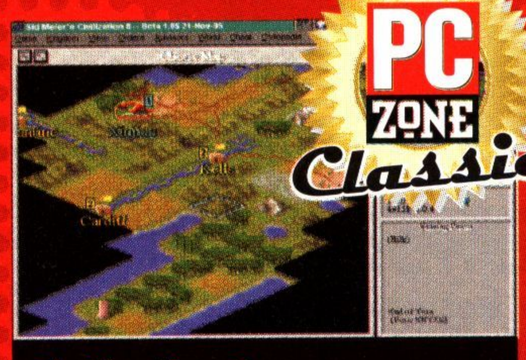
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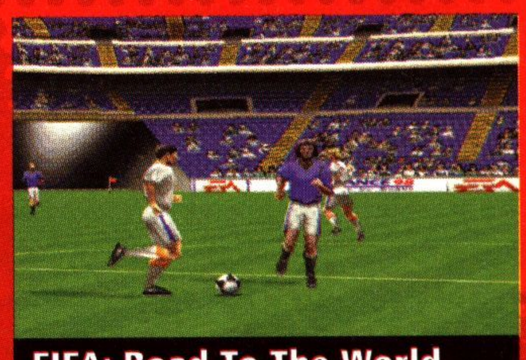
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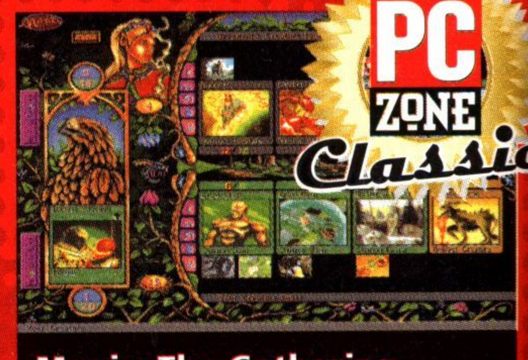
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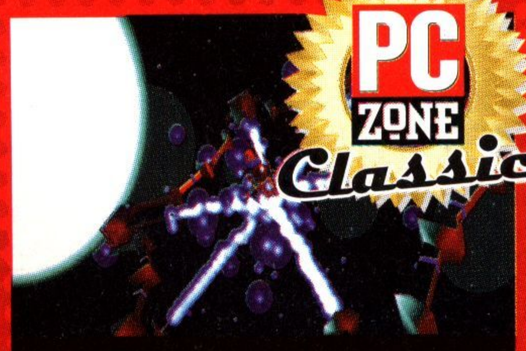
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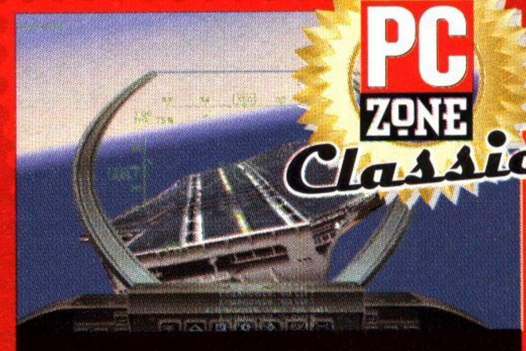
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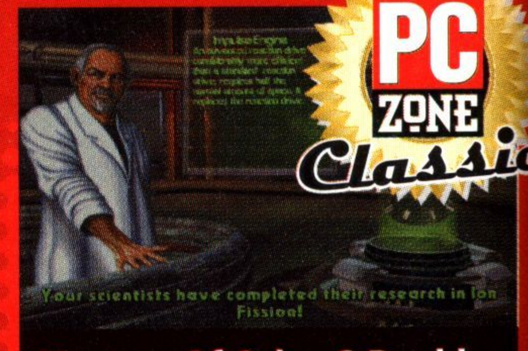
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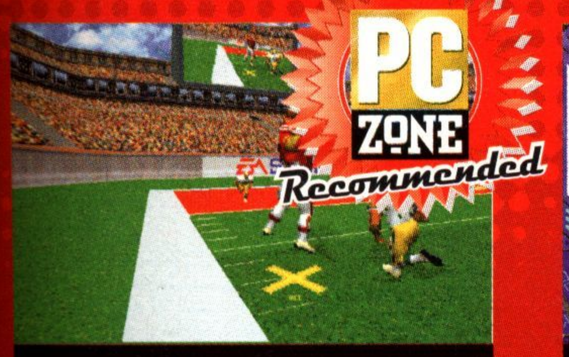
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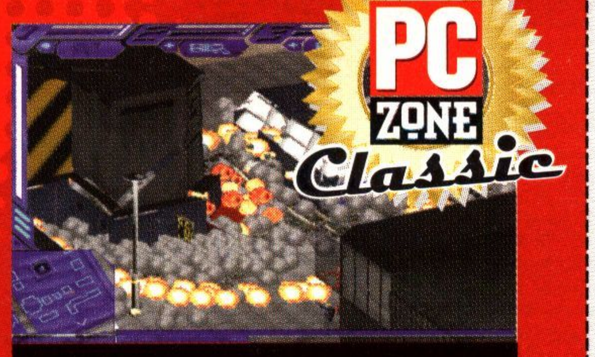
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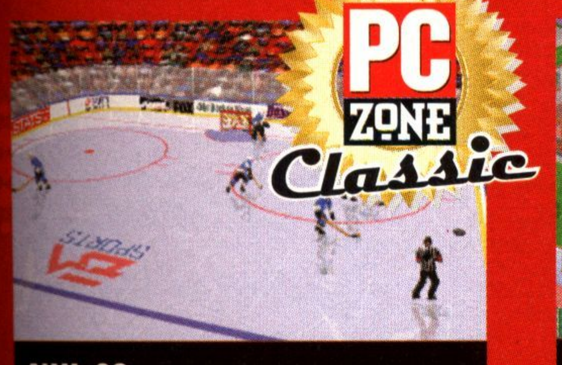
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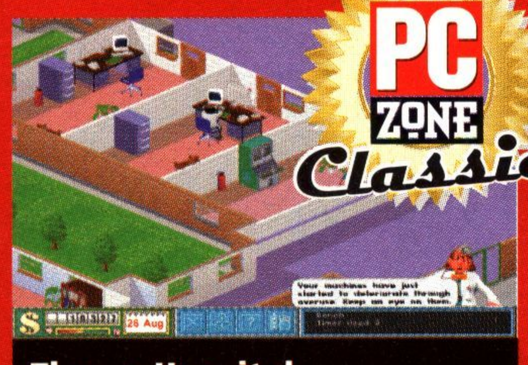
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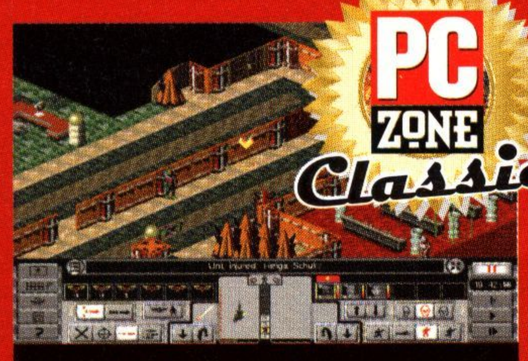
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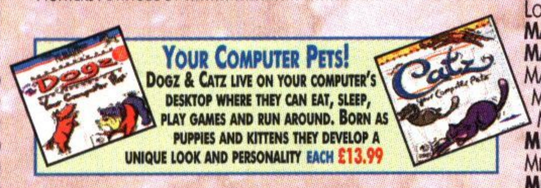


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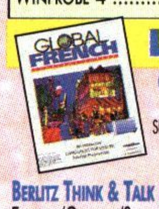
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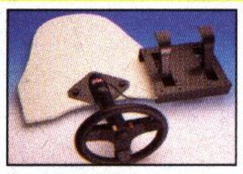
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PCY(X)

PC ZONE

Welcome to the *PC Zone* Recommended section. Here you'll find the cream of the games we've painstakingly reviewed and picked out over the years, plus those we feel should go down in PC gaming history as all-time Classics.

IN AN EFFORT TO KEEP IT simple, we've split it up into genres: Action games, Sports simulations, Adventure games, Flight simulations, Driving games, Role-playing games and Strategy games.

The top ten games of each genre are then listed, with a brief summary of the game, review score, publisher and contact number. Most of the games listed here were awarded *PC Zone* Classic status (90 per cent and above), and some managed a *PC Zone* Recommended award (80 per cent and above) at the time that they were reviewed. To achieve the highest accolade, a game must not only be very playable, entertaining and offer long-term appeal, but it must also be original and/or bring something new and worthwhile to the genre. To this end, we've included some sequels, and although these show a lower score than the original title, they are deemed better (they didn't get a higher score 'cos the game had already been done, so the sequels weren't exactly bursting with originality – okay?), so this guide isn't a list of the highest scoring games ever reviewed by *PC Zone*, but a guide to the best games currently available.

When you're reading the reviews in the rest of the magazine, please remember to bear this section in mind. The highest scoring game is supposed to represent a benchmark in a particular genre, and we will always be comparing new games with this, in accordance with the above criteria. If you use this section along with the 'In Perspective' guide that now accompanies every review, you should be able to gauge pretty accurately whether a game is worth buying, whatever your personal preference and taste. As a result, you will see games dropping out of this section as new and better titles are released, so keep your eyes peeled for new entries in each of the genres.

Jeremy Wells, Editor

Classic Recommended

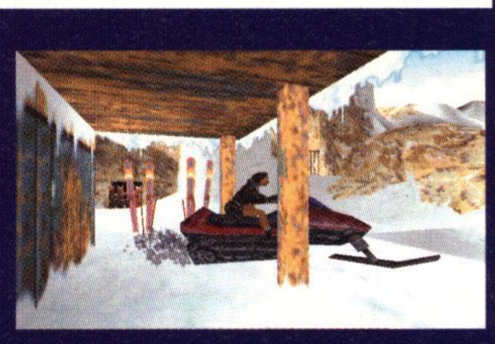
Action



QUAKE (96)

The seminal 3D shoot 'em up and quite possibly the most important PC game ever released. Very atmospheric when played as a one-player game and untouchable when played over a network. Despite the fact that it's now pretty aged, it's still *the* office favourite. Definitely 'pour hommes'!

Publisher:
GT Interactive (0171 258 3791)



TOMB RAIDER 2 (94)

The first game broke the mould, but the sequel even improves on the original. *Tomb Raider 2* sports a curvier Lara, massive new levels to explore and a tidier control system. The game comes with native 3Dfx support and looks better than ever.

Publisher:
Core/Eidos (0181 780 2222)



JEDI KNIGHT: DARK FORCES II (94)

It's not *Quake*, but then it doesn't even try to be. But it is a compelling, technically superb blend of action and exploration wrapped up in the *Star Wars* universe. Altogether most impressive.

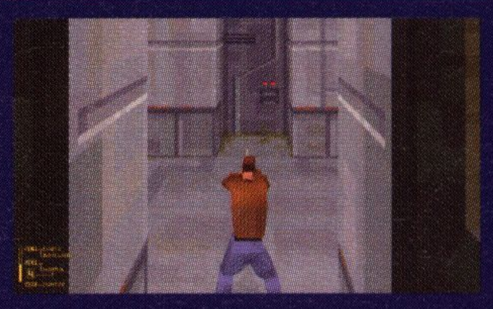
Publisher:
LucasArts/VIE (0171 368 2255)



HEXEN II (94)

The long-awaited, hub-based gib-fest sweeps into action with its trusty sword, hoping to carve a big 'H' on the chest of its older cousin, *Quake*. This is a first-person hack 'em off with balls as well as a big chopper.

Publisher:
Activision (01895 456700)



FADE TO BLACK (94)

The unofficial sequel to the excellent *Flashback*, this is a near-perfect blend of third-person exploration and combat action. The technical precursor to the fantastic *Tomb Raider*, it's a classic in its own right.

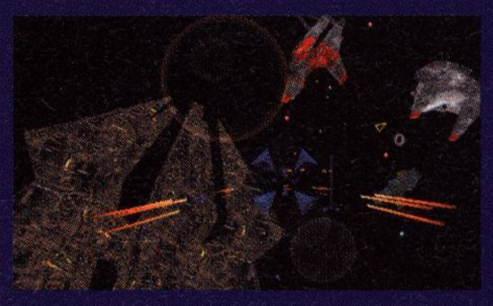
Publisher:
Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



DUKE NUKEM 3D (93)

The debate rages on, and there are still an awful lot of people who rate *Duke* over *Quake*. It's not as technically impressive, but brags gameplay by the bucketload in one-player mode and when played over a network.

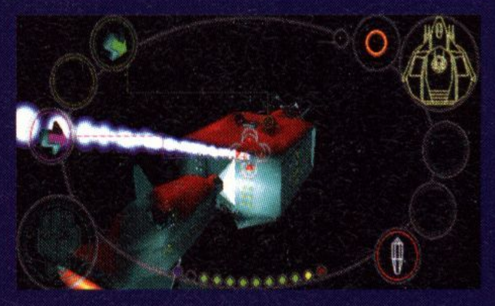
Publisher:
Eidos Interactive (0181 780 2222)



PRIVATEER 2: THE DARKENING (94)

The ultimate mix of space combat, *Elite*-style trading and FMV action, *Privateer 2* was the first big budget release from Origin to use live action in a positive way. Packed with stars, this is pukka stuff.

Publisher:
Origin/EA (01753 549442)



DARKLIGHT CONFLICT (92)

It might not have a mega-budget cast or a film licence, but *Darklight* knocks spots off just about every other space combat sim there is. It looks utterly fantastic and the 3D engine is quite superb and very fast.

Publisher:
Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



TIE FIGHTER (94)

Still rated by many as the finest space combat sim ever released, it successfully blends all the kudos of *Star Wars* with a wicked new engine for super-fast *TIE* on *X-Wing* fisticuffs.

Publisher:
LucasArts/VIE (0171 368 2255)



MAGIC CARPET 2 (92)

The original wooed us with its speed and smoothness – this is even better, with new night-time bits, monsters and a very useful on-line help system. Technically exquisite, the game engine's yet to be bettered.

Publisher:
Bullfrog/EA (01753 549442)

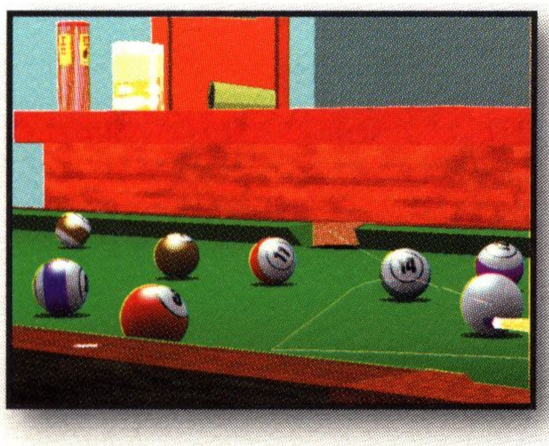
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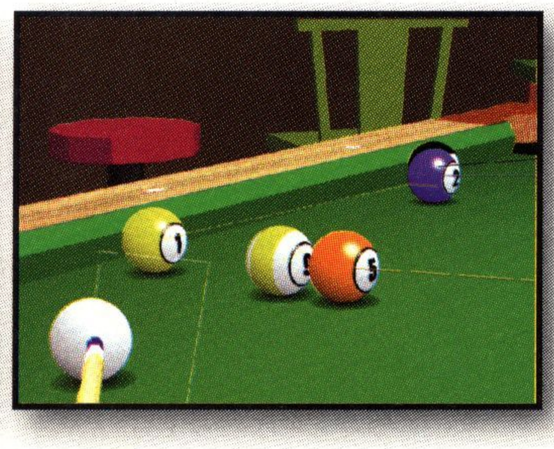


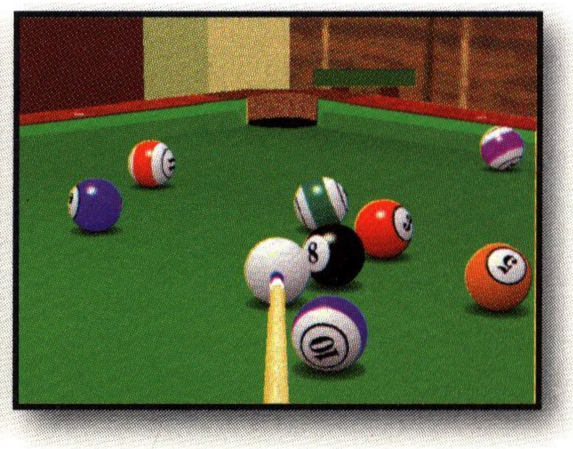
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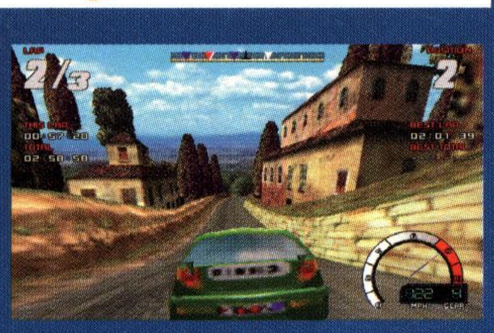
Driving



CARMAGEDDON (95)

Awesome arcade-style racer that's heavy on the hit 'n' run and gameplay. Loads of different cars to choose from, plenty of tracks, three ways to play and a fab multi-player network mode make this one of the most entertaining driving games ever.

Publisher:
SCI (0171 585 3308)



SCREAMER RALLY (91)

The *Screamer* games just get better and better. This is by far the best version, with its mad undulating tracks and high-speed courses. As well as 3Dfx support and network play, there's also a split-screen option. And priced at just £24.99 it's an absolute bargain.

Publisher:
VIE (0171 368 2255)



NETWORK Q RAC RALLY (94)

The seminal rally racer from Europress is the ultimate in skiddy, slidey action. 27 (count 'em) stages, loads of cars, a fantastic eight-way network option and varied terrain and conditions make this superior to the limited *Sega Rally*. Go buy it!

Publisher:
Europress Software (01625 859444)



INDYCAR 2 (90)

If you don't mind going round and round in circles but still crave that unbelievable detail, this is the only real alternative to *F1GP2*. Technically mind-blowing, though a little chuggy on anything but a high-end Pentium in SVGA mode.

Publisher:
Sierra (0118 920 9100)



MICRO MACHINES 2 (93)

The console classic is converted to the PC as new tracks provide a new challenge. The easy-to-use control system means it's user-friendly for the uninitiated. This version comes with a track designer.

Publisher:
Codemasters (01926 814132)



POD (90)

One of the first racing games to support 3Dfx, Direct3D and MMX. With awesome graphics and with new cars, tracks and power-ups promised to be posted regularly on the Internet, you'll never get bored.

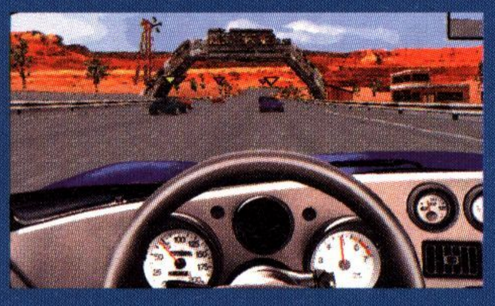
Publisher:
Ubi Soft (0181 944 9000)



FORMULA 1 GRAND PRIX 2 (92)

The amazing sequel to the greatest F1 driving sim ever. Updated brilliantly for the 94/95 season with all-new detailed circuits, cars and teams. Ninja Pentium needed to run the hi-res mode – but it's still great.

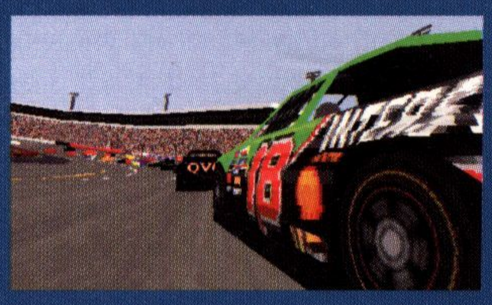
Publisher:
MicroProse (01454 893893)



THE NEED FOR SPEED (89)

Exciting arcade racing action at its best, with a good selection of cars and road tracks. Suicidal oncoming traffic and angry cops entrench *TNFS* firmly within the 'arcade' game sector.

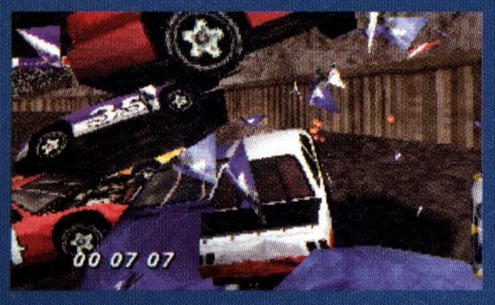
Publisher:
Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



NASCAR RACING 2 (92)

A worthy upgrade featuring a new, smoother 3D engine, improved opponent AI, more controllable cars, a simple single-screen car set-up and a multi-player network option. The constant stream of headset messages adds atmosphere. A racing sim fan's must.

Publisher:
Sierra (0118 920 9100)

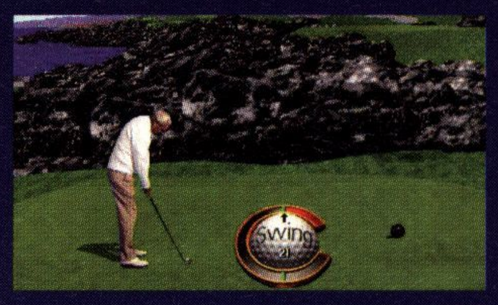


DESTRUCTION DERBY 2 (86)

Another sequel, but this one's actually much better than the first game. The tracks are much improved, the cars handle much better and there's loads more options. It's still worth buying even if you own the original.

Publisher:
Psygnosis (0151 282 3000)

Sports



LINKS LS (94)

The classic golf sim gets an update, and unsurprisingly it's fab. There's more options, luscious graphics, a redesigned menu and a view selection system. There's even a built-in upgrader for all the old data disk courses you splashed out on.

Publisher:
Eidos Interactive (0181 780 2222)



PETE SAMPRAS TENNIS 97 (92)

Okay, so this game doesn't quite better *Super Tennis* on the SNES, but it's as close as you're going to get on the PC. The simple control system means that it's instantly playable, but we may as well tell you now that the women's skirts still don't fly up when they serve.

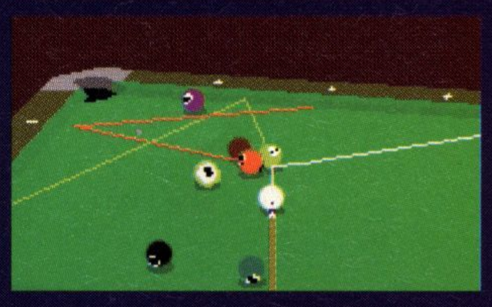
Publisher:
Codemasters (01926 814132)



NHL 98 (94)

Another year, another *NHL*, but this one isn't just the best ice hockey game, it's one of the best sports games we've ever seen. Super 3Dfx-ed graphics, fantastic animation and awesome presentation make this a sports title not to be missed.

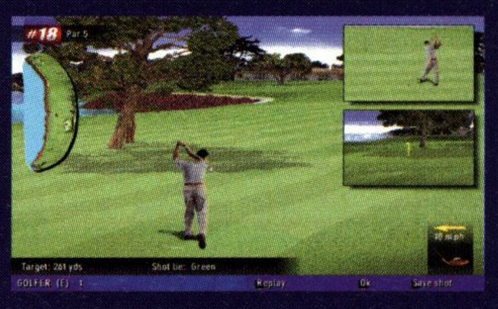
Publisher:
EA Sports (01753 549442)



VIRTUAL POOL (91)

No self-respecting pool fan should miss out on this simple but very playable sim with an ingenious mouse-drag control system and an impressive engine. One-player games are fun, but the two-player games and network links, which are even better.

Publisher:
Interplay (01628 423666)



PGA TOUR PRO (94)

Nothing really distinguishes this version from the last, except for the brilliant and very easy to use Internet play facility. Waste no time, go and thwack some Americans now. Your country needs you.

Publisher:
EA Sports (01753 549442)



PRO PINBALL: TIMESHOCK! (91)

Remember *PP: The Web*? The second table in the series, this is better in every way. Improved ball dynamics, detail and sound effects, plus the world's dirtiest computer game voice returns to "Lock those balls".

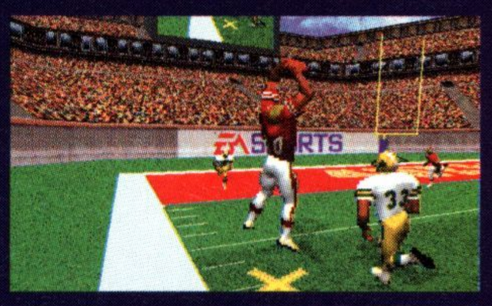
Publisher:
Empire Interactive (0181 343 7337)



ACTUA SOCCER (92)

The best PC soccer game, due to a super 3D polygonal engine and motion-captured players. One-player games can frustrate, but it excels in two-player mode; Barry Davies provides knockout commentary.

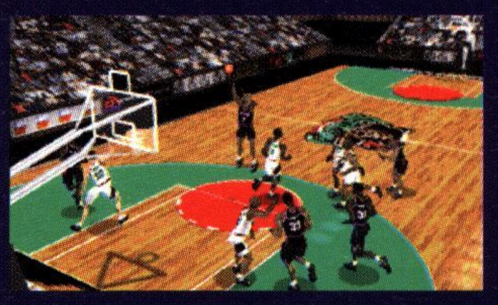
Publisher:
Gremlin Interactive (01142 753423)



MADDEN NFL 97 (87)

This PC incarnation is well up to the quality seen on the console versions, with all the features and slick presentation we assume as standard for an EA Sports release. The best American footie game on the PC.

Publisher:
EA Sports (01753 549442)



NBA LIVE 97 (92)

Much better than the previous version (which lacked drive), this offering is very well put together. Endowed with excellent graphics, sound effects and a totally hip soundtrack, thankfully it really does play as good as it looks.

Publisher:
EA Sports (01753 549442)



SENSIBLE WORLD OF SOCCER 96/97 (80)

This was delayed for such a while that by the time it came out the world had moved on. Rather like Matthew Le Tissier taking a free kick. Did we say that? But still a classic. Always.

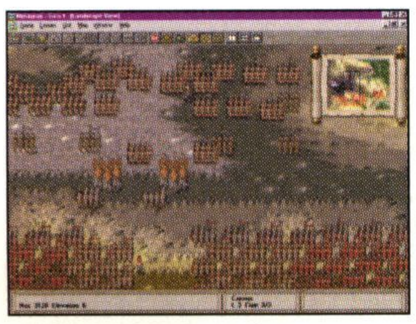
Publisher:
Warner Interactive (0171 258 3791)

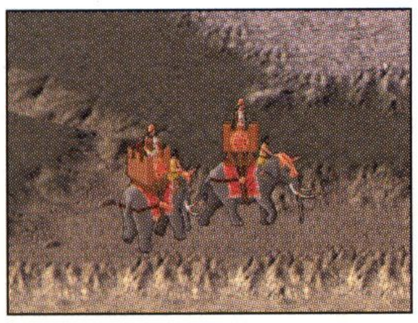
HANNIBAL.
MAKES WILLIAM WALLACE LOOK LIKE A NANCY IN A SKIRT.

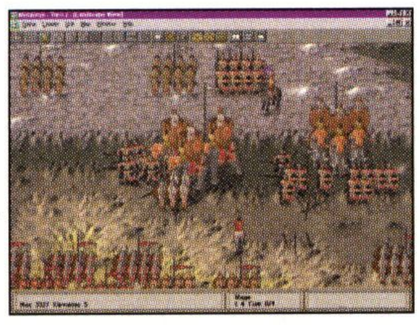


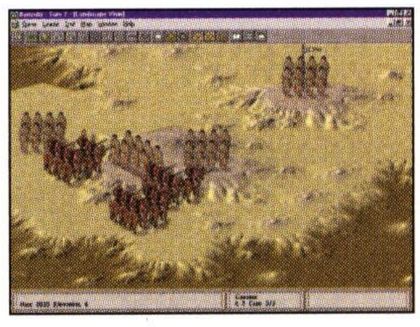
THE GREAT BATTLES OF HANNIBAL™ BRINGS AN EMPIRE TO IT'S KNEES

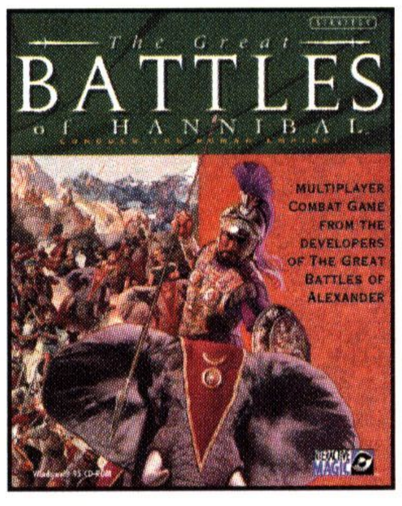
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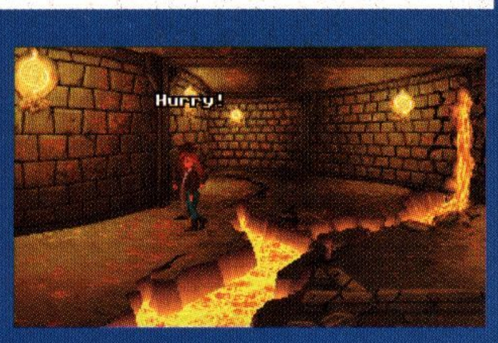
Adventures



ALONE IN THE DARK 3 (95)

Better than the previous *AITD* instalments, *Alone 3* is a tense, ambient tale of Navajo Indian magic and reincarnation that unfolds in the usual *AITD* manner. Now available as part of a compilation budget pack.

Publisher:
Infogrames (0181 738 8199)



INDIANA JONES AND THE FATE OF ATLANTIS (93)

Follow a post-*Raiders* Indy in his search for the submerged metropolis. Three ways to play make for a high replayability factor, and the inter-character banter is brilliant.

Publisher:
LucasArts/VIE (0171 368 2255)



BIOFORGE (95)

Futuristic *Alone In The Dark*-style game with impressive graphics, puzzles and soundtrack. Often preferred over *AITD* games as its unique blend of arcade combat is explosive. The only drag is EA's refusal to make a sequel for it.

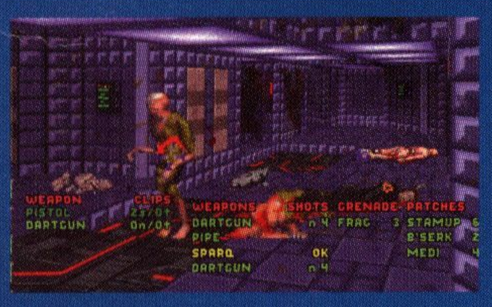
Publisher:
Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



LBA 2: TWINSEN'S ODYSSEY (93)

Twinsen, the sprite with the egg-shaped head, is back – this time to thwart those pesky Esmers in this sumptuous sequel. The huge play area, coupled with seamlessly linked puzzles, creates a great looking and atmospheric adventure.

Publisher:
Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



SYSTEM SHOCK (95)

This futuristic first-person cyberpunk adventure from the makers of *Ultima* was initially overlooked by many people. Now available on budget, this is a must-buy for those new to the game. The graphics might be a little dated, but the atmosphere is invigorating.

Publisher:
Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



SAM & MAX (93)

Steve Purcell's hilarious dog/rabbit 'freelance police' duo's first and only PC outing, in which they need to solve a host of bizarre puzzles. An all-talkie adventure with a gag-laden script, this is an essential budget-priced purchase even if you're not a massive point-and-click fan.

Publisher:
LucasArts/VIE (0171 368 2255)



STAR TREK TNG: A FINAL UNITY (94)

A style oozer. At times it's as if you're inside a *Star Trek: TNG* episode. Non-linear and beautifully presented, it's a Trek-head must-buy. Yet to be bettered.

Publisher:
MicroProse (01454 893893)



ECSTATICA II (90)

We dubbed it "An adventure with balls". It's hard, but it's one of the most rewarding adventures we've ever seen. It constantly surprises and is sure to keep even the most battle-weary adventure fan busy for weeks.

Publisher:
Psygnosis (0151 282 3000)



DISCWORLD II (93)

Perfect Entertainment's immaculate sequel to *Discworld* follows would-be wizard Rincewind in his search for the Grim Reaper. Not as hard as the first game, but bigger and better looking. *Discworld II* is a universally appealing adventure game.

Publisher:
Psygnosis (0151 282 3000)



THE SECRET OF MONKEY ISLAND 2: LECHUCK'S REVENGE (PRE-PC ZONE)

Anyone with even a casual interest in adventures must have this game. The graphics look dated, but the one-liners are side-splitters. And it's on budget!

Publisher:
Virgin (0171 368 2255)

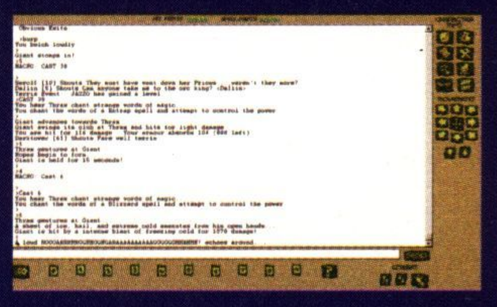
Role-Playing Games



ULTIMA UNDERWORLD 2: LABYRINTH OF WORLDS (94)

This improves on almost every aspect of its prequel, *The Stygian Abyss*. You explore a complex, ever-evolving dungeon; it has unsurpassed atmosphere and interaction.

Publisher:
Origin/EA (01753 549442)



TERRIS (88)

A MUD in the old-school style of text-based RPGs, but so addictive we're still playing it. The quests, puzzles and monsters will keep you going for days. The gameplay is excellent, if you can handle the 'texty-ness'.

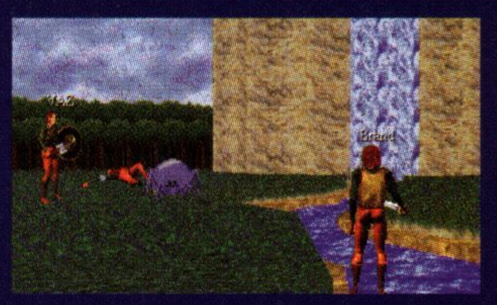
Publisher:
AOL (0800 2797444)



REALMS OF THE HAUNTING (93)

Although overlooked by many fans of the genre, our Mallo gave it a whopping 93% when he reviewed it some months ago. Still well worth a look if you happen to see it going cheap, *ROTH* is a well cool mix of adventure and RPG.

Publisher:
Gremlin Interactive (01142 753423)



MERIDIAN 59 (86)

This ground-breaking on-line RPG allows thousands of people to interact with each other in the same fantasy universe at the same time. Garish and horrible graphics aside, it's one of the best on-line multi-player RPGs around.

Publisher:
3DO Company (0181 296 1949)



LANDS OF LORE: GUARDIANS OF DESTINY (92)

Four long years in the making, Westwood Studios' mammoth new adventure proved itself to be more than worth the wait. Sumptous visuals and a tremendous atmosphere combine to make *Lands Of Lore* an undeniable instant classic.

Publisher:
VIE (0171 368 2255)



RAVENLOFT: STONE PROPHET (78)

A great improvement over SSI's previous AD&D *Ravenloft* RPGs, the player has to battle his way through a landscape populated by Stone Golems and vicious scorpions. The graphics are average but the intuitive spell/combat system is a joy.

Publisher:
Mindscape (01444 246333)



ULTIMA VII (89)

Arguably the best of all the *Ultima* games, *Ultima VII* blends character interaction and the exploration of the world of Britannia. The last *Ultima* series to give complete party control. Soon to be *Ultima Online*.

Publisher:
Origin/EA (01753 549442)



ULTIMA UNDERWORLD: THE STYGIAN ABYSS (PRE-PC ZONE)

This took RPGs away from first-person tile-based RPGs. Amazing architecture, witty characterisations, layers of storyline and the best ending of any game in history.

Publisher:
Origin/EA (01753 549442)



DIABLO (88)

Standard hack 'n' slash fare, but it's pulled off with such style that the overall game experience is addictive. A great storyline compensates for repetitive arcade combat and supremely detailed animation makes it a superb coffee-table game.

Publisher:
Zablac/Blizzard (01626 332233)



EYE OF THE BEHOLDER II (PRE-PC ZONE)

An 'olde-worlde', first-person RPG, but its progressive, party-based gameplay and subtle story elements set it apart from the other dross. The flick-screen graphics are dated, but dungeon design's worth a look.

Publisher:
VIE (0171 368 2255)

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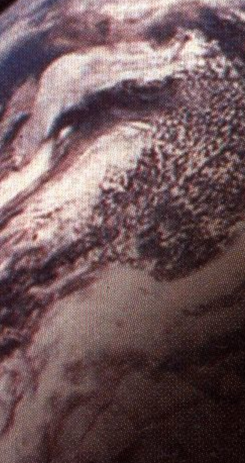
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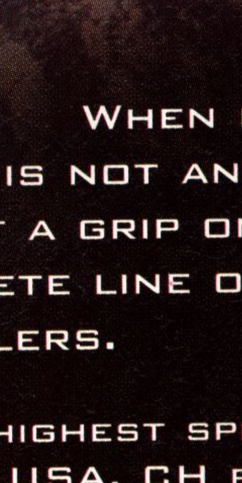
F-16 Combat Stick



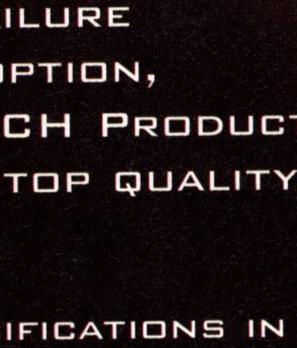
Flight Stick Pro



Force FX



Jane's Combat Stick



Pro Pedals



Virtual Pilot Pro

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Strategy



DUNGEON KEEPER (96)

A game with a genre almost impossible to define, *DK* takes *SimCity 2000*, *C&C* and *Ultima Underworld* and remoulds them into one hell of a title. Fantastic gameplay, and a lifespan on a par with the Queen Mother.

Publisher:
Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



INCUBATION (94)

Deeply atmospheric turn-based strategy game with graphics to die for. This is a welcome change from the endless stream of *C&C* clones and is as challenging as it's action-packed.

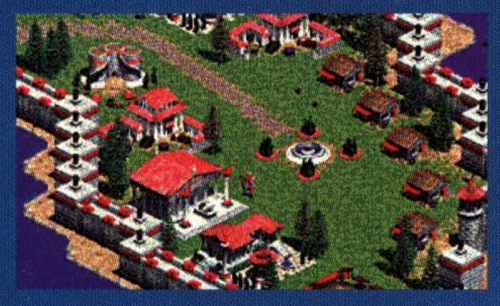
Publisher:
Blue Byte (01604 232200)



SYNDICATE WARS (95)

One of the best strategy games of all time gets a sequel, and what a fabulous sequel it is too. It houses a wealth of intricate levels, gorgeous graphics and enough gratuitous violence to keep anyone happy.

Publisher:
EA/Bullfrog (01753 549442)



AGE OF EMPIRES (94)

Think of *Civilization 2*. Imagine the same great empire-building gameplay, some excellent graphical touches and comprehensive multi- and single-player options (all in real time). That's *Age Of Empires* in a nutshell.

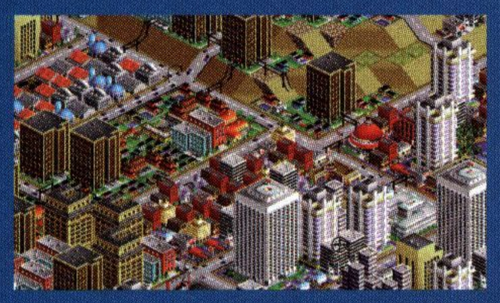
Publisher:
Microsoft (0345 002000)



X-COM 3: APOCALYPSE (95)

A revamped engine and a healthy helping of real-time combat have brought the fantastically addictive *X-COM* series bang up to date. If you like your strategy games deep and meaningful, you should buy *X-COM 3* immediately. It'll keep you busy for weeks.

Publisher:
MicroProse (01454 893893)



SIMCITY 2000 (92)

A classic game that deserves its reputation as one of the all-time greats in the strategy world. Build and maintain the city of your dreams and cope with all the problems a real-life Mayor would come up against. It's a lot more fun than it sounds, trust us.

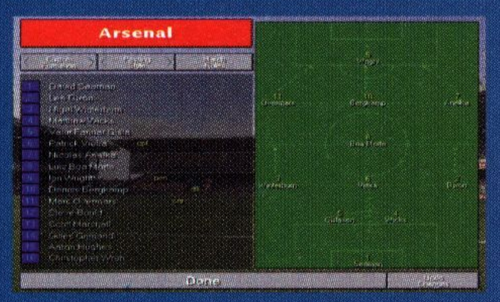
Publisher:
Maxis (0171 505 1500)



COMMAND & CONQUER: RED ALERT (94)

...or *C&C* in SVGA with a few new units. It's a testament to the original's gameplay that the sequel can get away with adding few new features and still be fun to play.

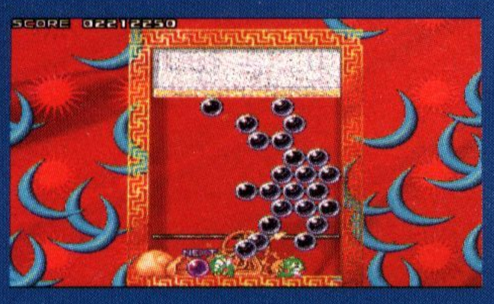
Publisher:
Virgin (0171 368 2255)



CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 97/98 (90)

The best football management game ever gets its seasonal update and a few added extras – you can now play a number of leagues simultaneously, and change stats.

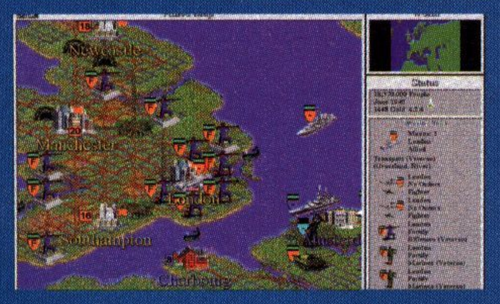
Publisher:
Eidos Interactive (0181 780 2222)



PUZZLE BOBBLE (94)

We can't agree exactly where *Puzzle Bobble* fits in *PC Zone Recommends*. Does it belong in here, with the *Civ*s and *Sim*s of the PC gaming world, or should it go in the action section? Who cares, as long as it's in...

Publisher:
GT Interactive (0171 258 3791)



CIVILIZATION 2 (90)

Explore the world, conquer territories and research new technologies in one of the most successful strategy games ever. It's not that different to the first one, but it merits a '90s update and a place here.

Publisher:
MicroProse (01454 893893)

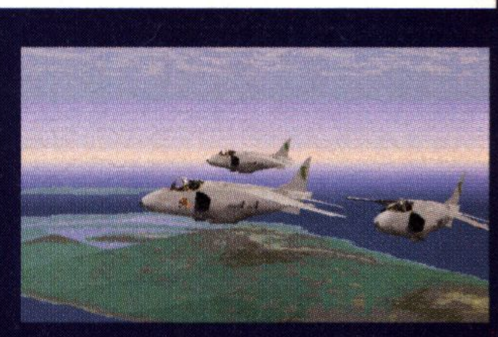
Flight Simulations



EF2000 (97)

With fantastic graphics and a very realistic flight model, this is one of the best flight sims on the PC. Not even Microsoft's mighty *Flight Sim* can topple it from the top of the *PC Zone* prop-head ladder.

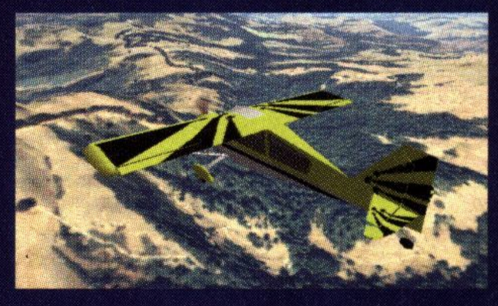
Publisher:
Ocean/DID (0161 832 6633)



US MARINE FIGHTERS (92)

Lovely graphics and a realistic enough flight model. Originally released as a mission disk for *US Navy Fighters*, *Marine Fighters* now comes as part of the *US Navy Fighters Gold* pack, so go get that instead!

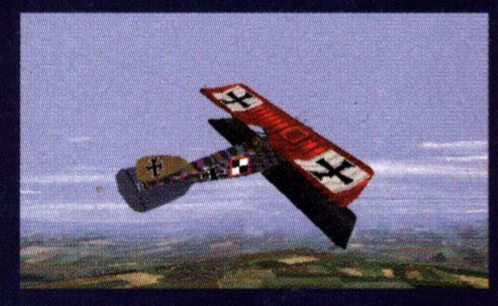
Publisher:
Electronic Arts (01753 549442)



FLIGHT UNLIMITED (96)

This was the first flight sim to sport truly amazing graphics and a frighteningly realistic flight model. You don't get to kill anyone (just like *Flight Sim 95*) but it still stands up well against today's competition, and you still need a beefy machine to fly it.

Publisher:
Looking Glass/Virgin (0171 368 2255)



FLYING CORPS (92)

Action-packed WWI flight sim with neato graphics. Nostalgic gamers will recall *Red Baron* as one of the greatest WW1 flight sims ever – this improves on the old classic to become the best WW1 sim currently available for the PC.

Publisher:
Empire Interactive (0181 343 7337)



APACHE LONGBOW (96)

The *EF2000* of helicopter sims, in as much as it marries fab graphics with a realistic flight model. The structure encourages you to adopt the same tactics as a real Apache pilot (or so we're told) and the missions are challenging and varied enough to keep you at it for weeks. It's big, too.

Publisher:
Digital Integration (01276 684959)



COMANCHE 3 (92)

This latest version of the *Comanche* flight sim is without a doubt the finest we've seen yet, sporting juicy terrain graphics due to a revamped VoxelSpace engine. Despite an accurate flight model, it still delivers intense gameplay, and is extremely good fun.

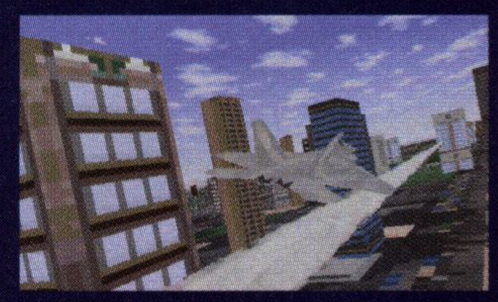
Publisher:
NovaLogic (0171 405 1777)



FLIGHT SIM '98 (94)

Another year, and yet another flight sim from Microsoft. However, this time, with two new aircraft, a helicopter, hundreds of new airports and impressive 3D acceleration, it's really worth having.

Publisher:
Microsoft (0345 002 000)



JETFIGHTER III (91)

The follow-up to one of the most popular sims ever. Fly over three and a half million square miles of accurately-mapped terrain of South America. You get to shoot things too, but there's no duty free option.

Publisher:
Eidos Interactive (0181 780 2222)



SU27 FLANKER (95)

One for flight sim purists. Admittedly the graphics are crap, but our reviewer raved about it. A great flight model and superb mission builder make it an essential buy for prop-heads everywhere, just don't expect your best mate to be impressed.

Publisher:
Mindscape (01444 246333)



A-10 CUBA (90)

Functional graphics (cough) for a game that captures the imagination, mainly because the plane is an absolute joy to fly. Slightly limited with the absence of a fully-fledged campaign but great fun nonetheless, and pretty speedy on a modest Pentium.

Publisher:
Activision (01895 456700)

GET REAL

Featured at the Motor Show









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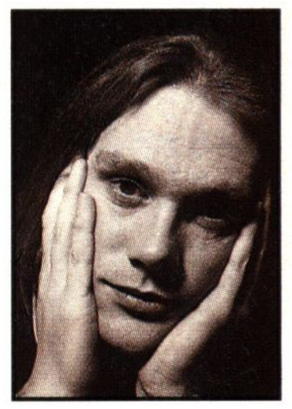
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International Rally Championship

WORD PROCESSOR

What's been yanking your chain this month then eh? Jeremy Wells is the man who hid in a bunker as letters rained down on him. He emerged momentarily to be held accountable and answer your questions...



Write in!

Send your letters to:
WordProcessor, PC Zone, Dennis Publishing, 19 Bolsover Street, London W1P 7HJ

Send your e-mail to:
letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk

CIX:
letters.pczone@dennis.co.uk
Look out for the PC Zone chat forum if you're on-line.

NB: We at PC Zone reserve the right to edit, change and completely re-write any correspondence in an effort to make ourselves appear smug, witty and intelligent.

QUAKE II DARK

Before I start, let me get this clear. I am a total *Quake* fan. I love the game. Especially CTF. So I am not just slagging for the sake of it. I have just seen the screen shots for *Quake II* in Issue 56, and I have to say, they look absolutely crap. The whole captivating feel of *Quake* was due to it's 'darkness' (for want of a better expression) and creepy characters. The new ones look just like 13 year old Spice Girl fans. I hope these shots are just pre-final mock ups that are given out so mags can say 'here is an exclusive preview', then added to some banal babblings about the game which don't really tell the readers anything.

Cheers for the job well done so far, I love the new look. Keep it up.

Dave – AKA Quaz

Quake II does represent something of a departure from the moody, doom (no pun intended) and gloom of the first game, but this has probably got as much to do with the fact that the screenshots you've seen have all been hi-res, 3D accelerated grabs that we have lightened up in Photoshop so they print okay. We've played through a few levels and can confirm that *Quake II* is just as atmospheric and in parts as dark as the original. The new lighting effects are especially cool. One thing's for sure, you're going to need a bit of a ninja-bast to play the game in all its glory.



***Quake 2* will be considerably brighter than it's gloomy predecessor.**



Blood, gore, horny cows, *Carmageddon's* got the lot.

CARMAGEDDING IT!

I am a loyal subscriber to your superb magazine and I have to praise you on the following point; after your excellent review of *Carmageddon*, I rushed out and bought it as soon as it arrived in the shops, only to find out that the pedestrians were zombies and the red blood was now green. Alas, I still played it and completed it after a couple of weeks and I was just about to toss it into the cupboard to start gathering dust (and start playing *Interstate'76* again!) when *PC Zone* decided to publish the 'gore' patch. Upon seeing this, I immediately copied the necessary files from your CD into the HD, jammed the *Carmageddon* CD in the drive, and loaded it up. After a minute or so of nail biting, imagine how happy I was to be able to run down American footballers, old women and REAL cows!! So thanks to you, a good game has become an immense game that I am still playing to this day.

With this in mind, seeing as *Carmageddon* is now the pedestrian version will it also be the pedestrian version for the *Splat Pack*? Also, can you recommend a good (and cheap!) 3D accelerator card as all the good games (*Resident Evil, Shadows of the Empire, Jedi Knight* etc.) need them as the minimum requirements? Thanks a lot and keep up the good work!

David Toohill, Glasgow, Scotland

Unfortunately, the *Splat Pack* features zombies, just as the final release did. However, try using the 'colour palette change' patch we ran on our CD a few months back and see what happens. If you're after a 3D accelerator card, we'd suggest that you consider the Maxi Gamer 3Dfx. It may not come bundled with loads of demos, but it's one of the cheapest cards around at

Letter of the Month

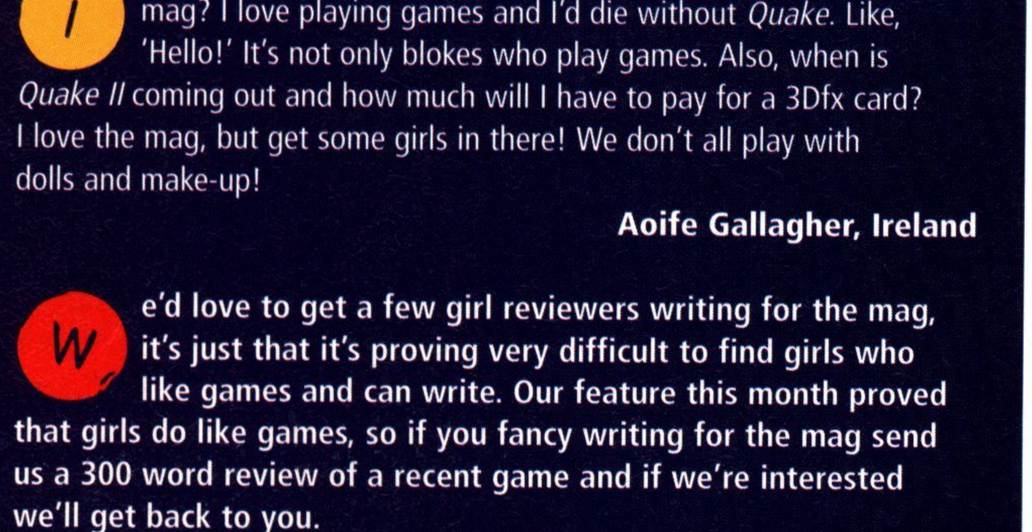
BRING ON THE GIRLS?

I would like to ask why you have no girls reviewing games in your mag? I love playing games and I'd die without *Quake*. Like, 'Hello!' It's not only blokes who play games. Also, when is *Quake II* coming out and how much will I have to pay for a 3Dfx card? I love the mag, but get some girls in there! We don't all play with dolls and make-up!

Aoife Gallagher, Ireland

We'd love to get a few girl reviewers writing for the mag, it's just that it's proving very difficult to find girls who like games and can write. Our feature this month proved that girls do like games, so if you fancy writing for the mag send us a 300 word review of a recent game and if we're interested we'll get back to you.

If your letter is selected as 'Letter of the Month' we'll send you a bundle of T-shirts and maybe even a game. COO!



just under £100. For further details contact Maxi on 0181 944 9000.

DOOM64

I know I'm going to get slagged off for this but... Have you played *Doom* on the N64? Do you, like me, think it is the most incredible version of the great game so far? I'd like to say I didn't spend all that money on a console like that just to play a re-worked version of a game that is, let's be frank, freely available to PC owners (well, the one level shareware version anyway) but looking at the other crap that is available for the "most powerful console ever etc. etc." I may be just kidding myself. I don't like to think about how many hours/weeks/years I have spent playing *Doom* and *Doom2* and creating levels for them on my PC but what happens when I get an N64? Yup, I go out and buy the same bloody game (admittedly second hand, but still 40 quid). I was ▶



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WORD PROCESSOR



***Warlords III* turned out to be much better than we originally anticipated.**

pleasantly surprised. The game play, to be brutally honest, is actually better than the PC version. I know, that's blasphemy and a few days ago I would have laughed out loud at anyone who'd dare utter such drivel, but I have been playing it solidly all weekend and it is one hell of a game. It is like I imagined *Doom2* was going to be before it was released and, incredibly, *Doom64* is a much better one player game than...gulp...*Quake*. Yes, there you go, I said it. Trust me!

John Tapper, I'm 33. And I love *Carmageddon*.

We've played *Doom64* and to be honest we weren't overly impressed. The PC is a far more versatile machine than the N64, and with 3D acceleration, it's simply awesome. *Doom* on the PC is now old hat – that was years ago. A new version is bound to be better. Wait until you see 3D accelerated *Duke Nukem Forever, Quake II, Jedi Knight, UNREAL* and *Prey*. As far as games are concerned, the PC is now king.

PROCESSOR VS. 3D CARD

I don't know what to do! Do I upgrade my current Pentium 75 to a 200 or do I buy an accelerator card? Which would give me best performance? I'd be mega chuffed if you could tell me what the hell I'm supposed to do.

NoFear, Glossop, Derbyshire

It really depends on how much money you've got to spend and the types of games you play. Sticking a 3Dfx card in your machine will help matters, but you'll need at least 16 Mb RAM and your processor will struggle – it's really just a short term measure. We'd recommend you opt for a P200 and wait around three months and then buy one of the next generation 3D cards.



MORE TECHS PLEASE, WE'RE BRITISH

I am looking to buy one of these 3D graphics cards and it's all a bit "mystical, magical, voodoo, fx". I suddenly realised that the technical knowledge I had gleaned from other publications, which had enabled me to upgrade my tired old 486 into this games playing ninja I now possess (well it was when I did it), was now out of date.

As most of my past and future power-ups have been and will be in the name of gaming (Office97 already runs faster than I can) I thought it might be appropriate that the cutting "edge" gaming magazine we all love, contained a little more technical information on new options available out there, do they work and how do I use them. Lets face it folks, whatever excuse we kid ourselves with to justify upgrading our machines the truth lies somewhere very close to games. Keep up the good work.

Wingy (aka Dave Barrett), Cix

Resident tech bloke Chris Anderson is currently busy getting in every type of 3D accelerator card available in the Western World in preparation for a massive round-up that will appear in the next issue. He'll also be looking at other ways to improve your PC's performance. Reserve your copy now.

PAGE COUNT

Why do you sometimes give games that score 50 more pages than games that score in the eighties or nineties? When you reviewed the excellent *Warlords III* you only gave it a page and yet it scored 90. It just doesn't make sense.

Christopher Padfield, Maidenhead, Berks

Funny old world, innit? To be honest, we can't help it. We never really know how good a game will be until we've reviewed it and by the time the copy comes in it's often too late to change things. We do try and give the better games more space, but sometimes code comes in late, there's only a page left in the reviews section and we have to fit it in where we can. In retrospect, *Warlords III* deserved more space, Paul absolutely loved it – which surprised us all, including Paul. As a result, we will be dedicating more space to it in the form of a player's guide. On the whole though, I think you'll find that *PC Zone* reviews are longer than in other games mags. We like it that way and hope you do too.

WHERE IS STAR WARS – SUPREMACY?

I first heard and read about LucasArts' *Star Wars – Supremacy* in the supplement that came with the May 97 issue of *PC Zone*. I then read the preview in the June issue, but have since read nothing more. You don't even mention in your Hot Line section. Has it been delayed? Is it still coming out? It sounded great, but where is it?

Matthew Hardman, Chelmsford, Essex

As far as we know, LucasArts have held back the release date of *Supremacy* while they work on the combat model. We haven't included it in the Hot Line section lately because we don't know when it's due for release. The chaps at LucasArts tell us that it'll probably be released early next year. Rest assured, we'll be doing an update soon.



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Press Comment

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Press Comment

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PC Gamer November 1997



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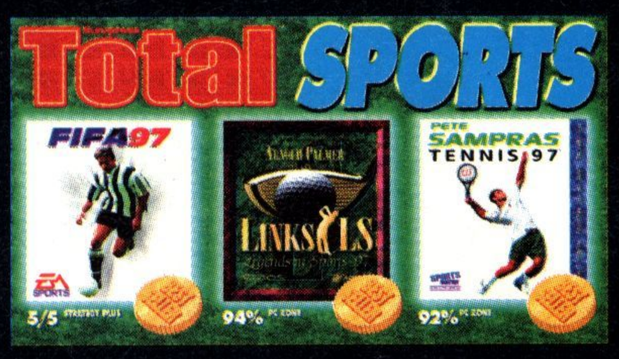
Total SATISFACTION



FIFA 97

Links LS

Pete Sampras Tennis 97





Screamer 2

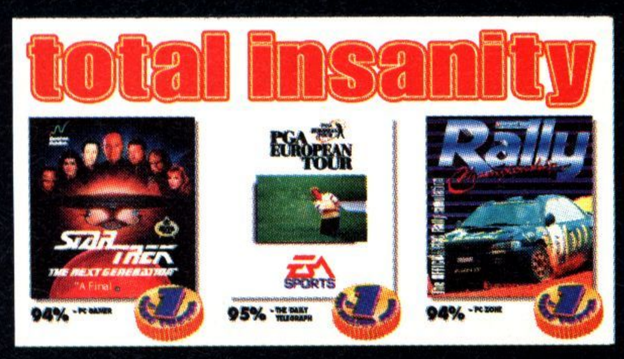
International Rally Championship

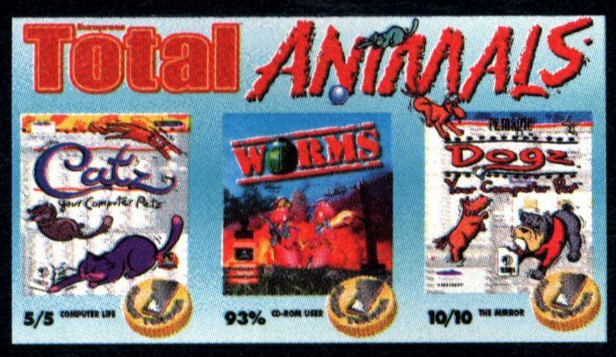
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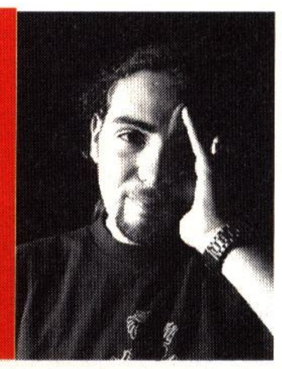


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Comment



John Davison wonders why so many great games are released at the same time.

CHRISTMAS PUDDING

JUST AS THIS ISSUE of PC Zone hits the shops, the games stores are going to be filled to overflowing with all of the stuff we've been talking about for months.

November 14 and 21 are the last two 'big' release dates that all of the software houses are aiming for this year. If they don't get their games out on time they stand to lose out on selling as many copies as they can over the Christmas period. It's a funny time – it happens every year – and what goes on is complete madness.

Typically, developers have about two years to put their concoction together before their publisher insists that they stop what they're doing and hand over releasable code – very few developers have the clout to flick a two-finger salute while biting the hand that feeds them. Bullfrog have effectively managed to dominate EA over the years (*Dungeon Keeper* anybody?), and more recently teams like id, 3D Realms and Epic have adopted a 'you'll get it when it's finished' attitude, but ultimately it's pretty rare.

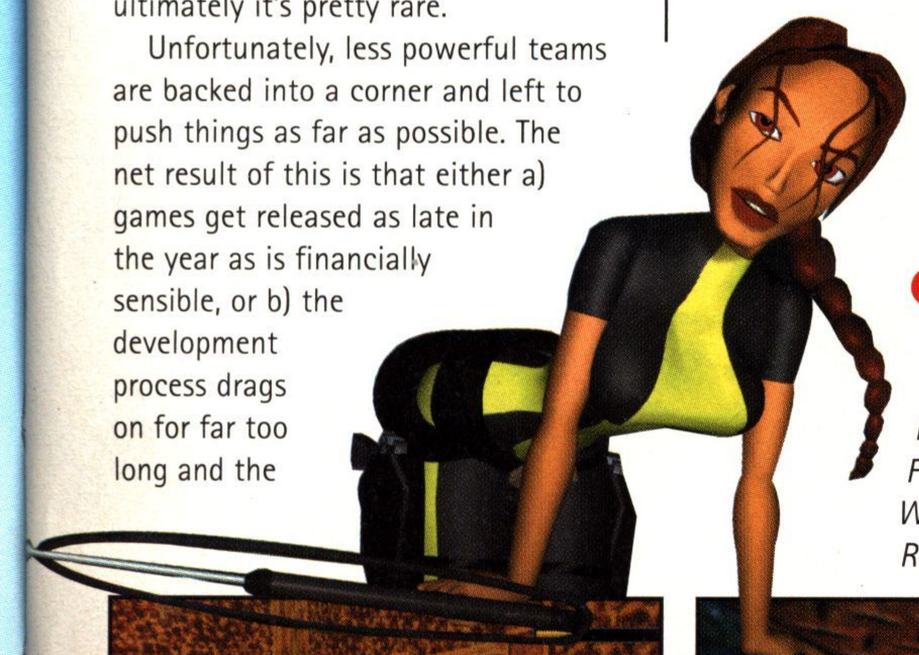
Unfortunately, less powerful teams are backed into a corner and left to push things as far as possible. The net result of this is that either a) games get released as late in the year as is financially sensible, or b) the development process drags on for far too long and the games miss that all-important mid-November period. Should b) actually occur, the accepted logic then seems to be that the team might as well just sod off for another three months and make sure that they get the bloody thing finished in time for the end of Quarter 1 (late March)... or else.

This means that after a relatively quiet patch in late summer and early autumn the market suddenly goes bonkers and all those games we've been raving about for months actually turn up. At this stage we find – quite literally – hundreds of games being released across all of the major formats, and all at the same time.

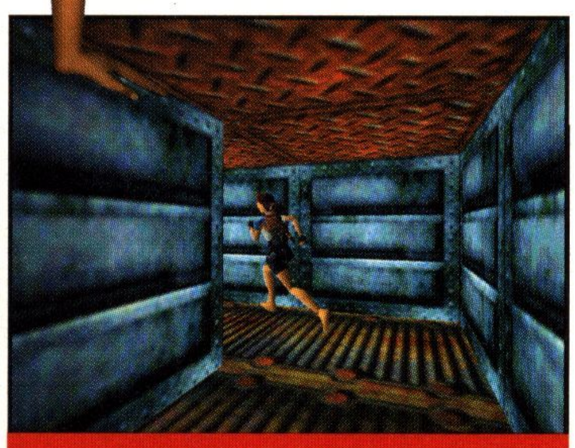
As you all know, a shop like Our Price or Electronics Boutique has only limited space in which to 'feature' all of these fantastic new games: special shelves, windows, large areas near the door and so on. But how can they possibly fit everything in? It's crazy – there just isn't the space to do every title justice. We end up seeing all of these games crammed into the stores vying for the same limited amount of cash that Christmas shoppers have at their disposal.



***Realms Of The Haunting*: possibly one of the best RPGs on the PC *ever*.**



Bound to sell by the ton: *Tomb Raider 2*.



Run for it Lara!

> ***"Very few developers have the clout to flick a two-finger salute while biting the hand that feeds them."***

Last year was ridiculous; *Tomb Raider*, *Red Alert*, *FIFA 97*, *Syndicate Wars*, *Privateer 2* and *Realms Of The Haunting* were released within a few weeks of each other. As is the norm with any constantly moving market, games achieve their best sales in the first few weeks – but in the run up to Christmas people only have a certain amount of cash that they can spend, so they buy just a couple. Which is understandable.

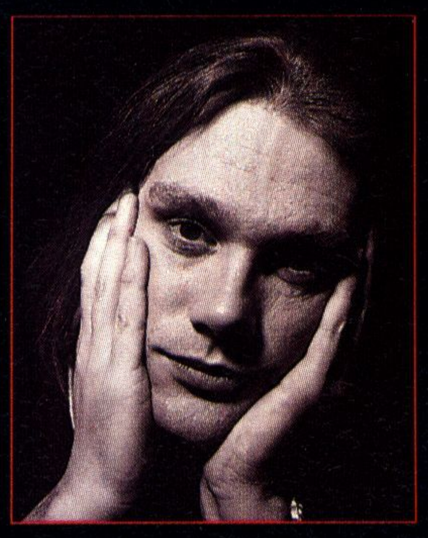
The result was that *FIFA 97* was the undisputed best seller (because people's mums bought it for them or something). Beyond this, *Red Alert* and *Tomb Raider* did extremely well (because of the inordinate amount of hype) while games such as *Syndicate Wars* performed very badly, selling less than 10,000 copies. By comparison *Tomb Raider* sold more than five times that number, and to date, *Red Alert* has sold more than 130,000 units!

By New Year 97 the whole market slowed down and games that didn't perform well failed to pick up in January or beyond. Gremlin regard *Realms Of The Haunting*, possibly one of the best RPGs on the PC *ever*, as a disappointing title. So much so that despite the fact that it's crying out for a sequel, they won't be producing one.

This year it's bound to happen again. *Tomb Raider 2* is sure to sell extremely well... but what else are you *really* looking forward to? *Blade Runner* will sell purely because of what it is, and *Jedi Knight* will be a hit for similar reasons. But there are so many other superb games being released at the moment. If you don't buy them before Christmas, do the same as when you buy music CDs: write down what you fancy getting and go back to the shops in the new year and buy those too.

Looking at *PC Zone* at this time of year you may feel there are too many games scoring 80 per cent and above; we're not being apathetic, there really are a lot of brilliant games around at the moment. There'll be a dead patch early next year as far as game releases go, so why not fill the gap with some games from this year? There are bound to be some bargains.

STOP LOOKING BACK



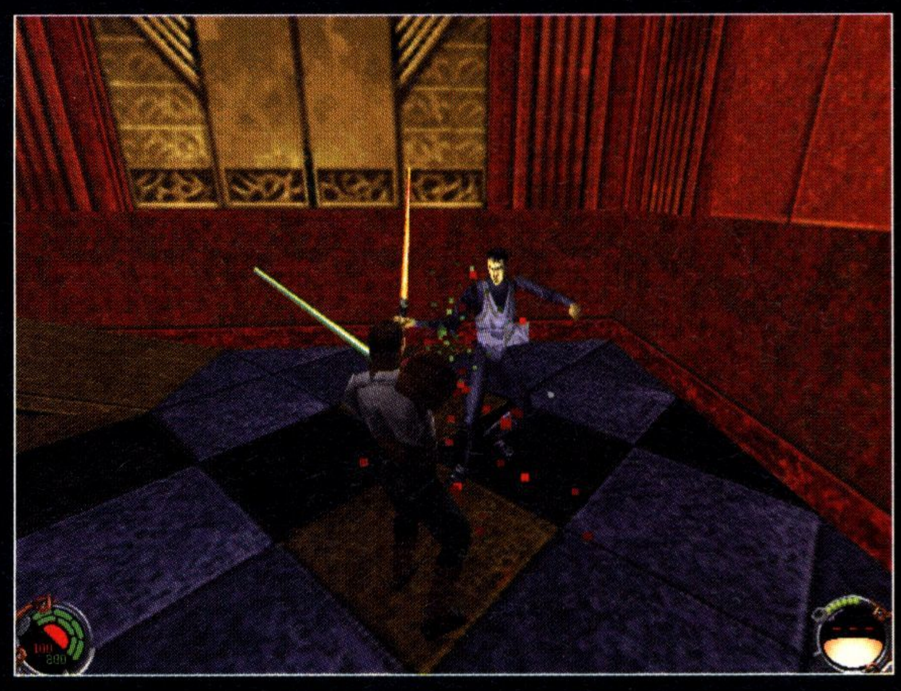
Christmas is just around the corner, and it's been a good year for games. Jeremy Wells looks back over the games that caught *PC Zone's* eye over the past 12 months.

IT'S NEARLY CHRISTMAS, WE'VE HAD LITERALLY hundreds of games in for review, so we thought we'd give everyone a chance to look back over the past twelve months and give us their nominations for their favourite games of the year.

Dep. Ed. Chris (as predicted) fell madly in love with *X-COM3: Apocalypse* as soon as he set eyes on it, but still hasn't quite managed to finish it. He's now spending every available hour playing *Lands Of Lore 2* (he sits and chats with Mallo about it for hours), he's completed *Diablo*, *Imperium Galactica* and is still addicted to *Age of Empires*. His game of the year is undoubtedly *X-COM3* "by about a million miles."

Staff Writer Richie has been spending his time playing *Jedi Knight*, the numerous deathmatch *Quake* conversions we've been getting in and *Total Annihilation*. He's also admitted losing hours of his life to *Red Alert* and *Carmageddon*. *Jedi Knight* gets his vote for game of the year. News Ed. Mallo has completed *Warlords III*, *Realms Of The Haunting* (twice) and has spent the rest of his time playing deathmatch *Quake* and challenging both Charlie and Macca to *Puzzle Bobble* tournies. He's currently pleading with Gremlin to do a sequel to *Realms Of The Haunting*, his game of the year. Publisher John has been playing a lot of deathmatch *Quake* (who hasn't?), is currently completely enamoured with *Jedi Knight* and admits that both *Total Annihilation* and *Dark Reign* are better than *C&C*. Once again, *Jedi* gets his vote for best game. Paul Presley has been playing deathmatch *Quake*, *CM2 97/98* (Bless) and is currently addicted to *Grand Theft Auto*. His game of the year? *Carmageddon*. Charlie Brooker still loves *Dungeon Keeper*, *Carmageddon*, *Theme Hospital*, *Constructor* and is working his way through *Tomb Raider 2* which he says is one of the best sequels ever. He too thinks that *GTA* is one of the most original and compelling games ever developed which is why he's making it his game of the year. Macca is still thrashing everyone at deathmatch *Quake*, likes the look of *Hexen II* and dabbles with *Jedi Knight* as and when the mood takes him. *Quake* still rules in his world – deathmatch, of course. Patrick is still addicted to *CM2 97/98*, can often be found perched in front of a PC playing *Screamer Rally*. He can also beat all comers at the lush *NHL 98*. *CM2 97/98* is his game of the year. Steve Hill has spent a solid week playing *Match Day 3*, can beat most people at *Kick Off 98*, loves the idea behind *Grand Theft Auto* (it obviously reminds him of his childhood). He still finds time to play regular *SWOS* tournies (with himself) at home and is getting to grips with *Sensi Soccer 2000* (his game of the year), but both me and Patrick can still beat him.

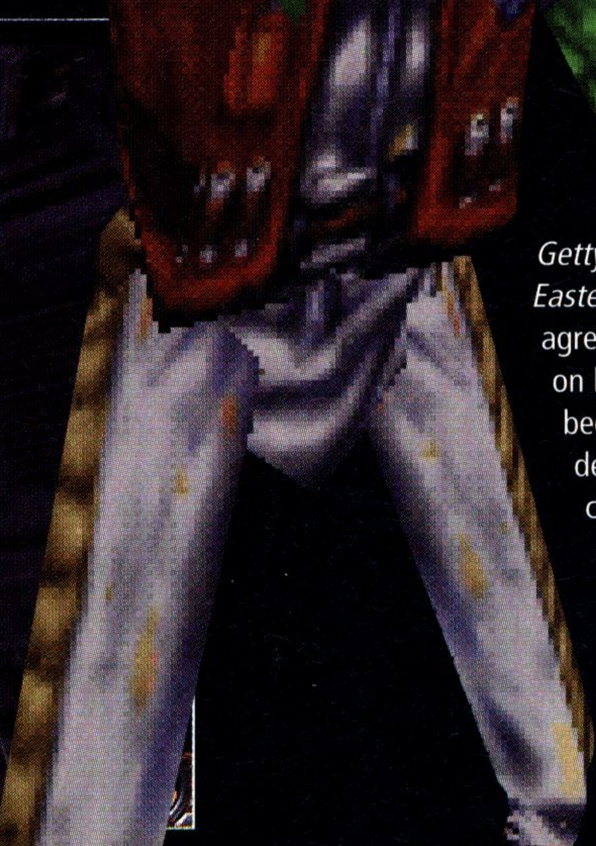
Strategy king Andrew Wright loves *X-COM3*, *Sid Meier's Gettysberg* and *Incubation* and thinks that *Eastern Front* is totally fantastic. He agrees with Chris when pressed on his game of the year. I've been playing a fair bit of deathmatch *Quake* (of course), love *Jedi* and am still addicted to *CM2 97/98*. I can't wait to get my hands on *Tomb Raider 2*. *Sensi Soccer 2000* gets a big thumbs up, but my game of the year is *CM2 97/98*. Surprise, surprise. Z

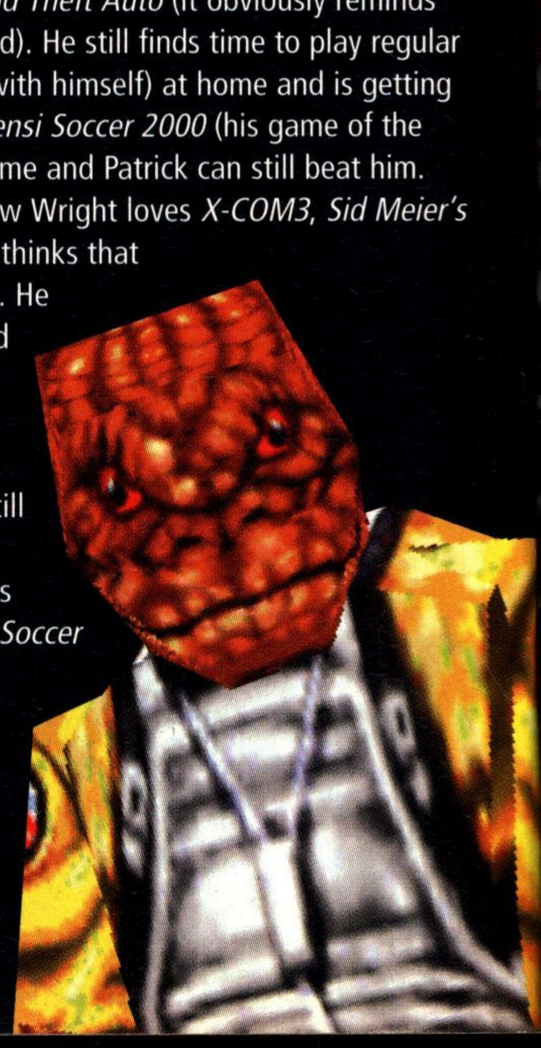


"Steve Hill loves the idea behind* Grand Theft Auto *(it obviously reminds him of his childhood)."

Jedi Knight is the game on everyone's hard disk this month. As _Dark Forces_ showed _Doom_ how it was done, _Jedi_ teaches _Quake_ a similar lesson.







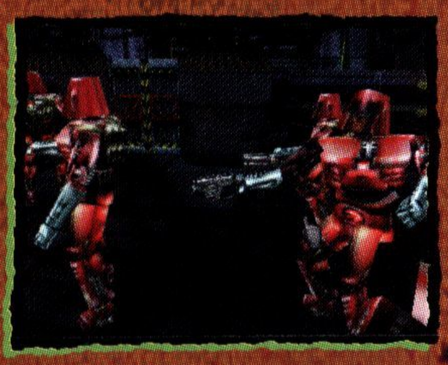
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